

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 319 957

CE 054 916

TITLE Training for Tomorrow's Countryside. The Report of the Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group.

INSTITUTION Countryside Commission, Cheltenham (England).

REPORT NO ISBN-0-86170-224-7

PUB DATE 89

NOTE 121p.; Document contains colored ink and small type.

AVAILABLE FROM Countryside Commission Publications, 19/23 Albert Road, Manchester M19 2EQ, England (5.00 pounds).

PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Conservation (Environment); Foreign Countries; *Job Training; *Management Development; Models; *Recreation; *Rural Areas; Rural Education; *Staff Development; Training Methods

IDENTIFIERS *Great Britain

ABSTRACT

An advisory group's study of the training needs of people working in countryside conservation and recreation in Great Britain recommends that: (1) employers and training providers make available training that balances the three strands of management (resources, people, and the system), ensure that staff acquire the full range of key skills and core knowledge as well as specialist skills, develop opportunities for all staff to participate regularly in high-quality training throughout their careers, and ensure that staff are aware of their organization's role within a changing countryside and society's demands upon it; (2) higher education develop training that teaches key skills and core knowledge; and (3) all training providers use the countryside training framework as the basis for developing training strategies and programs. (Appendices in the document contain an explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of specific training methods, a description of the education and training opportunities available to countryside staff, a glossary, 28 references, a list of organizations involved in workshops and consultations, a list of members of the Countryside Training Advisory Group, and the illustrative training framework for countryside staff training.) (CML)

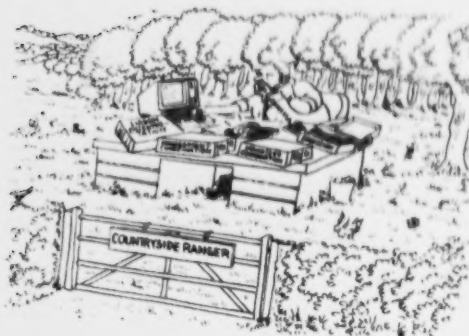
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED319957

TRAINING

FOR TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE

THE REPORT OF THE COUNTRYSIDE STAFF
TRAINING ADVISORY GROUP



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- ☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. Thompson
Countryside Ranger
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."



TRAINING

FOR TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE

THE REPORT OF THE COUNTRYSIDE STAFF
TRAINING ADVISORY GROUP

Published by: Distributed by:

Countryside Commission
John Dower House
Crescent Place
Cheltenham GL50 3RA

Countryside Commission Publications
19/23 Albert Road
Manchester M19 2EQ
CCP 269

© Countryside Commission 1989

Price: £5.00

Designed and Produced by Hawks Head Design, Bristol

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group

Training for tomorrow's countryside: a report
of the Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group

I. Great Britain. Rural regions. Landscape
conservation. Personnel. Professional education

I. Title

719'.07'1141

ISBN 0 86170 224 7

Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group

John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3RA
Telephone: (0242) 521381 Fonofax: (0242) 584270

Chairman: Prof Allan Patmore
Secretary: Katharine Hope

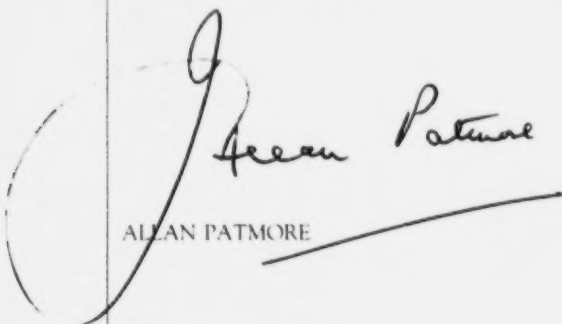
SIR DEREK BARBER
Chairman of the Countryside Commission

It gives me great pleasure to present the report of the Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group, a Group set up by the Commission in March 1988.

We have had an extremely demanding but enjoyable year in tackling the brief you gave us. The full Group met on 15 occasions, and in addition members led 7 special workshops, involving over 100 organisations and individuals in aspects of our work. Inevitably, given the complexity of the issues and the limited time at our disposal, we have not been able to deal with every theme in as detailed a way as we would have wished. We hope nevertheless, that our report provides a reasonably balanced account of the key issues, and makes clear what action we consider needs to be taken in a vitally important, but rapidly changing field.

Two threads have been evident through all our discussions. The first is the growing pressure at national scale for more – and better – training in all occupations and the importance for countryside staff in quickly seizing and furthering training initiatives in this field. The second is the high regard in which the Countryside Commission is held by the organisations we have consulted as a provider of both training advice and training itself. It is our earnest hope that this report will have a significant and supportive role in reinforcing the Commission's commitment to – and resourcing of – countryside staff training.

Finally, I must place on record my heartfelt thanks to all who have assisted our work over the last year and made possible the production of this report. Those who came to our workshops gave willingly of their knowledge and fuelled our enthusiasm. Every one of my fellow Group members has been unstinting in their time, commitment, good humour and in the sharing of a wealth of experience. My special thanks go to the Group's secretariat without whose help we could not have completed our task. This document is a reflection of all their endeavours and all their concerns. I hope it will be used to stimulate and inform widespread debate on the training needs of perhaps the countryside's most valuable resource – the staff who help shape its future.



ALLAN PATMORE

The Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group has been set up by the Countryside Commission to review and advise on the changing training needs of people working in conservation and informal recreation in the countryside.



Countryside
COMMISSION

Countryside COMMISSION

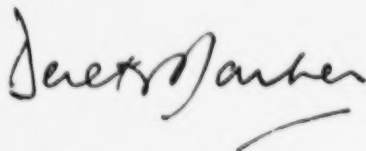
John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3RA

Telephone: (0242) 521381 Fonofax: (0242) 584270

The countryside is in the throes of considerable change and the nature of many jobs connected with conservation and recreation will not remain unaffected. The Commission – as a major contributor to the funding and promotion of countryside staff training – is particularly concerned about how future needs can be met, bearing in mind its statutory responsibilities for landscape and for countryside recreation.

The Countryside Commission established the Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group to consider whether current training provision reflected the future needs of countryside staff and to examine how improvements might be made. The Commission warmly welcomes the Group's report which will be of major interest and value to those in the field of countryside training. The Commission is grateful to the Group's Chairman, Professor Allan Patmore, to the members of the Group, and to all those who have contributed to its deliberations.

The Commission is pleased to publish the Group's report in the expectation that its proposals will focus attention on how the training of countryside staff can be improved. In doing so we invite, by 31 October 1989, comments and views from all with an interest or responsibility in the subject. Following careful assessment of both the Group's conclusions and the response to their report the Commission intends to publish a new policy for countryside staff training early in 1990.



SIR DEREK BARBER
Chairman, Countryside Commission.

	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
CHAPTERS	1 INTRODUCTION
	2 TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE – TODAY'S MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE
	3 A NEW DEAL FOR TRAINING?
	4 KEY SKILLS AND CORE KNOWLEDGE
	5 TACKLING TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE
	6 THE COUNTRYSIDE AND THE PROFESSIONAL
	7 DEVELOPING TRAINING SKILLS
	8 A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE
	9 TRAINING FOR TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE
APPENDICES	1 TRAINING PROVISION SOURCES AND METHODS
	2 A REVIEW OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COUNTRYSIDE STAFF
	3 SOME KEY SOURCES OF INFORMATION
	4 TRAINING FOR TRAINERS
	5 GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THIS REPORT
	6 REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY
	7 ORGANISATIONS INCLUDED IN WORKSHOPS AND CONSULTATIONS
	8 TRAINING ADVISORY GROUP
	9 LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS
	10 AN ILLUSTRATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR COUNTRYSIDE STAFF TRAINING

CONTENTS

	PREFACE & FOREWORD	
7	CONTENTS	
9	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
15	CHAPTER ONE	
17	CHAPTER TWO	
	THE BACKGROUND TO THIS REPORT	
	WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COUNTRYSIDE?	
	A COUNTRYSIDE OF CHANGE	
	PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE	
	WHO MANAGES THE COUNTRYSIDE?	
	WHO ARE 'COUNTRYSIDE STAFF'?	
	COUNTRYSIDE STAFF – THE NATURE OF THEIR WORK	
	NEW ROLES, NEW SKILLS – THE NEED FOR TRAINING	
26	CHAPTER THREE	
	TRAINING – WHAT IS IT?	
	CURRENT ATTITUDES TO TRAINING	
	PRESSURE FOR CHANGE	
	CURRENT TRAINING PROVISION	
	HOW ADEQUATE IS TODAY'S TRAINING?	
	COORDINATION OF TRAINING	
	INFORMATION AND PROVISION	
	STANDARDS OF QUALITY AND CONTENT	
	FULL AND PART-TIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES	
	IN-SERVICE TRAINING	
	THE ROLE OF SHORT COURSES	
	THE USE OF OTHER APPROACHES TO TRAINING	
36	CHAPTER FOUR	
	THE SKILLS OF MANAGEMENT	
	CORE KNOWLEDGE	
	DEVELOPING KEY SKILLS	
	DEVELOPING CORE KNOWLEDGE	
	KNOWING MORE ABOUT THE ORGANISATION	
	BUILDING ON CORE KNOWLEDGE AND KEY SKILLS	
	RECOMMENDATIONS	
44	CHAPTER FIVE	
	THE THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP	
	HOW CAN MANAGERS DEVELOP TRAINING?	
	USING EXISTING IN-HOUSE EXPERTISE	
	APPOINTING TRAINING COORDINATORS OR OFFICERS	
	USING OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS	
	WORKING WITH TRAINING PROVIDERS	
	A CODE OF GOOD TRAINING PRACTICE FOR EMPLOYERS AND MANAGERS OF COUNTRYSIDE STAFF	
	A CODE OF GOOD TRAINING PRACTICE FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS	
	A CODE OF GOOD TRAINING PRACTICE FOR TRAINING PROVIDERS	
	IMPROVING INFORMATION AND ADVICE	
	DEVELOPING EVALUATION METHODS	
	IMPROVING NATIONAL COORDINATION	
	NATIONAL STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS	
	RECOMMENDATIONS	
55	CHAPTER SIX	
	PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES AND STAFF ASSOCIATIONS	
	PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES	
	CHANGING ATTITUDES AND BROADENING PERSPECTIVES	
	PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING – PROVIDING A COUNTRYSIDE PERSPECTIVE	
	CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS	
	A COUNTRYSIDE INSTITUTE?	
	STAFF ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIETIES – PROVIDERS OF SUPPORT AND TRAINING	
	RECOMMENDATIONS	
64	CHAPTER SEVEN	
	THE TRAINERS' ROLES	
	THE FULL-TIME PROFESSIONAL TRAINER	
	TRAINING FOR THE SPECIALIST	
	DEVELOPING NETWORKS	
	OCCASIONAL TRAINERS AND INSTRUCTORS	
	THE MANAGER AND TRAINING	
	THE TRAINING ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE	

CONTENTS

TRAINING FOR OTHER SPECIALISTS
MAINTAINING THE QUALITY OF TRAINING
RECOMMENDATIONS

73	CHAPTER EIGHT
	DEVELOPING A NEW FRAMEWORK
	USING THE FRAMEWORK
	A FRAMEWORK FOR COUNTRYSIDE
	TRAINING MODULES AND
	QUALIFICATIONS
	LOOKING AHEAD
	PRACTICAL COUNTRYSIDE SKILLS
	TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS
	CAREERS IN COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT
	RECOMMENDATIONS
82	CHAPTER NINE
	CURRENT SOURCES OF FUNDING
	CAN WE AFFORD NOT TO TRAIN?
	MAKING THE CASE
	TRAINING AS A KEY TO THE FUTURE
	RECOMMENDATIONS
90	APPENDIX ONE
93	APPENDIX TWO
107	APPENDIX THREE
108	APPENDIX FOUR
109	APPENDIX FIVE
112	APPENDIX SIX
114	APPENDIX SEVEN
115	APPENDIX EIGHT
116	APPENDIX NINE
118	APPENDIX TEN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Chairman extends his grateful thanks to all those who helped the Countryside Staff Training Group in undertaking its remit; and in particular

- those bodies and organisations who released staff to attend Group meetings and workshops;
- the Commission's Countryside Staff Training Officer, Rosie Simpson; and Dr Roger Clarke, Director (Policy) and Keith Turner, Head of Training and Voluntary Action at the Commission's Headquarters; together with Jane Beard and Julie Williams for immense help in producing typescripts;
- Ken Pyne for the cartoons;
- special thanks are reserved for Katharine Hope, the Group's Secretary, around whose enthusiastic and efficient help the year's programme was successfully concluded.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. The Countryside Commission set up the Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group (CSTAG) in March 1988 to review and consider the training needs of people working in countryside conservation and recreation. Its main task was to advise the Commission on its findings and to make recommendations on a range of training issues arising from its remit. The publication of the CSTAG report will enable the wide range of interested parties to comment on the Group's findings and to inform the debate on how training for countryside staff can be improved. The Commission will then formulate its own policy for countryside staff training.
2. The work of CSTAG involved a wide range of individuals and organisations working in countryside conservation and recreation management. The report is a review of the current scene in countryside education and training, a critique of present practices and methods and a platform for putting forward considered suggestions for improving training provision. Whilst CSTAG did not consider in detail the training needs of others involved in the countryside – for example, those working in farming and forestry – many of its findings could be equally valid for such groups.

CHAPTER TWO: TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE – TODAY'S MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

3. The countryside has seen rapid and far-reaching changes over the past 40 years. These changes are reflected in the varying roles of the people who work within the countryside. A substantial number of people are now employed by a range of organisations to manage the countryside for conservation and recreation purposes.
4. Countryside staff work in a multi-disciplinary field and have a broad range of responsibilities. Job remits are changing as the demands upon

the countryside become increasingly more complex. There is a need to develop the skills and knowledge of countryside staff to enable them to cope with change, adapt to new policies and priorities, and be sensitive to the needs of people within the broad context of the countryside. Training has a vital role to play in this respect.

CHAPTER THREE: A NEW DEAL FOR TRAINING?

5. Sound training is one of the most effective ways of developing the potential of both organisations and individuals. It enables staff and volunteers to learn new skills, improve existing ones, acquire knowledge, and take on new responsibilities. Above all, it helps people to adapt to change and to feel confident in their work. Training should take place at all stages of life or a career and is equally relevant to all staff, paid or voluntary, regardless of their role or status. Training must be regarded as a continuing and flexible process; it should be an integral and essential part of an organisation's and a person's development.
6. CSTAG identified a number of issues that have acted as obstacles to the development of training for countryside staff.
 - There are a number of misconceptions about the value and purpose of training.
 - Few organisations plan and budget for training. It is rarely seen as an investment and often lacks support from managers and decision makers.
 - Much training that takes place is informal and on-the-job. There is great reliance on external courses which do not always meet the needs of staff and organisations. Often other forms of training provision are not recognised.
 - Employers frequently lack the knowledge and experience to identify training needs, plan, provide and evaluate training. There is little guidance available to countryside organisations on how to develop training.

- Many training courses, both pre-service and in-service, have developed as an ad hoc reaction to perceived needs and job markets. There is little coordination, and access to information about available training can be difficult.
7. There is a growing recognition of the need for training in all sectors of industry, and more positive attitudes are developing. CSTAG has identified many new developments and examples of good practice, but to capitalise on the more favourable climate for training, provision must be relevant, well coordinated and evaluated to allow it to be seen as giving value for money.

CHAPTER FOUR: KEY SKILLS AND CORE KNOWLEDGE

8. CSTAG considered that countryside staff should recognise their roles as managers in three respects:
- a. managing the physical resource of the countryside itself;
 - b. managing for the people using the countryside;
 - c. managing the system to enable the first two to be achieved.
- To work effectively within these three stands of management, staff require 'key' organisational, interpersonal and practical or technical skills. Additionally, staff require essential 'core' knowledge of the organisations they work for, and an understanding of the wider countryside. It is important that countryside staff can see their work within the broad framework of the changing countryside.
9. Current training provision goes part way towards developing key skills and core knowledge, but to improve the relevance of such provision, CSTAG recommend that:
- 1. Employers and training providers should:
 - a. make available, on a continuing basis, training that:
 - balances the three strands of management: of the resource, for people and of the system;

- ensures that all staff acquire the full range of key skills and core knowledge as well as specialist skills;
 - b. develop opportunities for all staff to participate regularly in high-quality training throughout their careers;
 - c. ensure that their staff are fully aware of their employing organisation's role, policies and corporate practices within the context of the changing countryside and society's demands upon it.
2. Universities, colleges and other training providers should develop courses and training that teach key skills and core knowledge.
3. The Countryside Commission and other organisations funding or approving training should support only training that follows Recommendations 1 and 2.

CHAPTER FIVE: TACKLING TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

10. There are positive signs that employers are beginning to give training a higher priority, but an absence of an effective relationship between employers, trainees and training providers. An apparent failure to communicate and to match needs with provision has been identified locally and at the regional and national levels. Managers have failed to recognise training as a cyclical activity, which has created problems in developing training strategies.
11. CSTAG has emphasised that everyone has a role to play in training. Employers, training providers, staff and volunteers must all become involved and will be guided through the stages of the training cycle by following the codes of good training practice. This needs to be supported by provision of better guidelines, materials and information about training. Evaluation of training and improved national coordination on training issues and practice is urgently needed.
12. To tackle these problems, CSTAG has recommended that:
- 4. Employers should:
 - a. adopt and implement the code of good training practice for employers and managers;

- b. prepare staff training strategies and programmes for their organisations;
- c. increase their staff expertise in training methods;
- d. establish a training budget equivalent to 5 per cent of staff salary costs.

5. Countryside staff and volunteers should:

- a. use the code of good training practice for countryside staff and volunteers;
- b. work with their employers to identify their individual training needs;
- c. be open to a range of training approaches to meet these needs.

6. Training providers should:

- a. adopt and implement the code of good training practice for training providers;
- b. work closely with trainees and employers to ensure training meets their real needs.

7. The statutory countryside agencies should:

- a. evaluate the effectiveness of different training methods;
- b. coordinate their activities to increase the supply and availability of information, advice and guidance on training.

8. The Countryside Commission should:

- a. promote the adoption of the codes of good training practice;
- b. support the development and regular updating of a National Countryside Training Information Service;
- c. establish, jointly with the Nature Conservancy Council, a Countryside Training Forum.

CHAPTER SIX: THE COUNTRYSIDE AND THE PROFESSIONAL

13. There is no one professional institute concerned specifically with the broad span of countryside management work. Many countryside staff are members of professional bodies such as the Royal Town Planning Institute, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the Landscape Institute, while others hold no formal professional qualifications. Many individuals, both with and without professional qualifications belong to special interest associations and societies.

14. This rather fragmented professional structure has caused many countryside staff to feel that they lack 'professional identity'. Some individuals have experienced problems in career development due to a lack of professional qualifications, yet such qualifications are not wholly relevant to countryside work. The countryside component of formal pre-service training for professionals is often a minor or peripheral element, and is not given a high priority in continuing professional development.

15. CSTAG noted that professional institutes and staff associations can have much to offer countryside staff in the way of training and support. This should, however, complement and not replace the training provided by employers.

9. Professional institutes should:

- a. review their academic requirements for professional qualifications to incorporate a wider countryside perspective;
- b. widen the base of their education and training policies to embrace countryside management more fully;
- c. extend their membership to include a wider spectrum of people working in countryside management;
- d. vigorously promote continuing professional development.

10. The proposed Countryside Training Forum should review the progress of Recommendation 9 and, if necessary, consider the need for a new professional body for countryside staff.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DEVELOPING TRAINING SKILLS

16. Better training for countryside staff will only result if employers, managers and decision makers give whole-hearted commitment to it; and if high-quality training opportunities are available. These will only materialise through the expertise of competent trainers. A lack of appreciation of training philosophy and methods, inadequate interpersonal and training skills, and a poor knowledge of the subject

taught only undermine the role and value of training.

17. There are few full-time training specialists employed by countryside organisations and departments, but many individuals have a training role. Managers and other staff with specialist knowledge and experience are frequently called upon to act as occasional trainers. CSTAG has identified the skills required by specialist and occasional trainers, and developed a checklist for assessing training providers.

11. All full-time and occasional trainers of countryside staff should:

- a. review on a regular basis their experience and portfolio of skills to ensure that they:
 - meet the expectations of their clients;
 - cover the need for communication and training skills;
 - have an appropriate level of qualification, knowledge and experience of the subjects taught.
- b. improve their training skills and share experience by contact with other trainers.

12. Managers of all countryside staff should:

- a. recognise their training role and influence, and accept their responsibility to provide effective training and guidance for their staff;
- b. develop training strategies and programmes, support the appointment of staff with responsibility for training and its administration, and encourage the use of other staff as occasional trainers;
- c. undertake further training where necessary to enable them to play an effective training role.

13. The Countryside Commission should help to improve the amount and quality of training expertise by:

- a. working with countryside organisations and training providers to increase the opportunities for both full-time and occasional trainers to develop their skills;
- b. setting up a pilot scheme to develop managers as trainers;
- c. equipping their own advisory staff to provide advice and information on countryside staff training.

CHAPTER EIGHT: A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

18. It can be very difficult to find a clearly marked – and intact – route through the plethora of different types of training and other opportunities that are available. Many gaps are evident and there is little logic behind the present system. A new framework is proposed, indicating how the three strands of management, key skills and core knowledge might be built into a countryside training programme. It aims to help countryside staff, training providers and employers to identify training needs and develop their strategies. It should also assist lead bodies and the NCVQ by providing, in broad outline, the field of countryside management and associated training objectives. It is also important to improve the system of qualifications and arrive at a better definition of the tasks that staff are expected to do.

19. Much concern has been expressed about the problems of career paths in countryside work. Many staff have to zigzag between different organisations in order to make progress. Seeking advancement is likely to be difficult within countryside work for some time, as the number of people seeking posts continues to exceed the number of openings. Nevertheless, training is extremely important in improving career prospects and enhancing job satisfaction. Employers can improve career structures by encouraging staff to develop their careers through regular training and by up-grading posts.

14. All with responsibility for countryside staff should use the suggested 'training framework' as a basis for developing training strategies and programmes.

15. COSQUEC, other lead bodies and examining and validating bodies involved with the countryside sector should:

- a. use the 'training framework' as a means to identify the training needs of countryside staff;
- b. ensure that qualifications are available at a variety of levels to cover the full range of countryside needs at a variety of levels;
- c. establish ways of integrating subject areas to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach.

16. Employers and managers should assist career development of the staff under their control by:
- providing training opportunities to enhance staff prospects;
 - clearly defining job descriptions and staff structures and grades;
 - ensuring that those who remain in a particular role, either through choice or lack of career opportunities, receive training which aims to:
 - improve job satisfaction,
 - develop individual responsibility,
 - encourage the development and use of their potential.

CHAPTER NINE: TRAINING FOR TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE

20. Training for countryside staff deserves a much higher priority than hitherto. It should become an integral part of the management policy of all employers. But making changes to training policies alone are not enough unless they are backed by realistic resources. Training demands – and deserves – a long-term investment, and the greatest rewards will accrue to those who maintain their contributions and commitment. Employing organisations should be aware of their present costs of training and ascertain whether these resources are being effectively spent in relation to the training needs identified. Whilst for some organisations additional resources may not be required, others will need to improve their provision if the training codes of practice standards are to be met. The costs of not investing in training should also be taken into account. These include under-use of staff capabilities, the costs of remedying delays, increased recruitment costs and inadequate use of expensive equipment.

Many organisations invest heavily in projects for countryside work but do not always consider the need for properly trained staff to manage them effectively. All organisations should consider their position in this respect and, in particular, those helping to fund or grant aid countryside work should ensure that only organisations which adopt the codes of practice receive support.

17. Bodies grant aiding countryside work and training should:

- make realistic resources available for the development of countryside staff training;
- link grant aid that has staffing implications to the adoption of the code of training practice appropriate to the grant receiving body.

18. The Countryside Commission should:

- review its in-house expertise in the light of increased demand for guidance on countryside staff training;
- provide increased financial support to enable employers of countryside staff to:
 - develop staff training strategies and programmes;
 - encourage staff to participate in a range of external training opportunities;
- provide new support to new training opportunities.



1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Many thousands of staff work in the countryside, employed by a variety of organisations, including voluntary bodies, local authorities, national park authorities and government agencies. Their jobs cover a similarly wide range of activities within the fields of landscape and nature conservation, informal recreation and public access, and enjoyment of the countryside. Along with other organisations the Countryside Commission supports many of them, either directly or indirectly. In recent years the number of people employed in such work has increased substantially and – equally important – the nature of much of their work is changing. The countryside is itself undergoing radical change and the effects are being felt by all those who work there.

Against this background the Commission set up a special advisory group – the Countryside Staff Training Advisory Group (CSTAG). We were given the following remit.

“Bearing in mind the present climate of changing policies for the countryside – including those of the Countryside Commission, the Group will:

- consider the current and likely future training needs of all staff in organisations or departments concerned primarily with countryside conservation (landscape and nature conservation), informal recreation and public access;
- recommend to the Countryside Commission the most practical means of meeting and monitoring these changing needs and advise the Commission on the implications for its policies in meeting and monitoring training needs;
- consider the related issues of countryside staff career structures and advise the Commission of the findings and on policy matters arising.”

- 1.2 Uppermost in CSTAG's mind was the crucial importance of training in helping people to develop their potential in learning new skills, improving existing ones and being able to adapt to new work priorities. The quality of countryside management depends on the quality of work undertaken by countryside staff. Equally, the effective use of scarce financial and staff resources depends largely upon the skills and abilities of those managing countryside organisations, departments and practical projects. The supply of appropriate training has not kept up with the demands of a growing number of staff in a fast-developing field and a review of the situation is essential. Additionally, an assessment of the skills and knowledge needed by the main groups of countryside staff would help the Commission to provide better training and advice, develop its training programme and influence the training of staff whose work affects, or impinges upon, the environment.

- 1.3 We have borne all this in mind very carefully in setting up our programme of meetings and agenda. As a group we have met 15 times, including a special two-day meeting in February 1989. But we have also been greatly assisted by the results of a series of seven workshops that we arranged during late 1988. Through these, involving over 100 participants, we were able to receive invaluable comment and opinion in specific areas that lay at the centre of our remit (see Appendix 7). We have taken full account of the workshop findings, and trust that our report and recommendations reflects their contributions and advice.

- 1.4 We hope too that our report fulfills the task set us by the Commission. But, as is so often the case, time has prevented us from investigating more fully the links between our remit and adjacent areas of interest and concern, for example in the agricultural and environmental education sectors, tourism, forest management, and in the applied ecological and biological field. Nevertheless, we feel that many of the basic tenets of good countryside education and training that we advocate are equally valid in these areas. So, in the interests of widening and

informing the debate on training, we offer our findings for the consideration of any group, trade or profession, whose interests or responsibilities concern the environment or the countryside in general: "if the cap fits . . .".

- 1.5 Our deliberations over the past year have taken many a twist and turn as we have tried to grapple with problems of definition, jargon and the complexities of dealing with a subject that is surprisingly little understood. Therefore our report is not simply a set of recommendations to the Countryside Commission. We offer it as a review of the current scene in countryside education and training, as a source of up-to-date information, as a critique of current practices and methods, and as a platform for putting forward suggestions to improve the present situation.

- 1.6 We are grateful to the Commission for providing us with the opportunity to explore this difficult but potentially rewarding area of interest. Whether we have arrived at the right conclusions is for others to decide, but we are convinced that changes are needed in education and training for countryside staff. There are some encouraging developments but these are too few and too superficial to ensure that the calibre of staff in future will match up to the expectations placed on them by the growing demands of society. The solution – as ever – is not a simple one. It lies in a tangible commitment by everyone concerned with an improvement in prevailing standards. For that reason the majority of our recommendations are for action by others and not solely the Countryside Commission. But we do place a special responsibility on the Commission in two regards: to consider how it can implement those of our suggestions specific to its concerns and interests and, equally important, to use its influence as the leading organisation in countryside staff training to encourage the raising of levels of awareness, understanding and commitment on the part of all organisations and individuals with responsibility for countryside staff.

- 1.7 The next decade will probably see an intensification of the trends of the last one. Change seems to be the order of things – but we are sure that in this there are inherently many opportunities for greatly benefitting the countryside and the environment in general. Those who work in the countryside stand to gain much as a result, with education and training providing the key to success.

2 TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE – TODAY'S MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

2

In this chapter we set the scene for our report, introducing the issues that we address in more detail later on. Within the broad context of an ever-changing countryside and the increasingly demanding and diverse responsibilities of the people who work within it, training assumes a sharper focus than ever before – and a new, much higher priority. There is a clear need for more and better training to help present and prospective countryside staff acquire and develop the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of future countryside management. Training is vital to help them respond to and manage change; to address new policies; to understand new aims and objectives; to adapt to novel roles and priorities; and to meet the challenge of promotion and additional responsibilities.



THE BACKGROUND TO THIS REPORT

- 2.1 The countryside has seen rapid and far-reaching changes over the past 40 years, wrought by farming, forestry, mineral extraction, housing and industrial development¹. Though it is not our aim to look at these forces in detail, we do, however, regard the changing countryside as the framework for our report, a framework within which **people** – their aspirations and future needs – take priority.
- 2.2 Managing the countryside to serve everyone's interests requires careful balancing of the demands placed upon it. Whether these are food and timber production or industry and housing, protecting and conserving a beautiful and healthy countryside, which also affords opportunities for recreation and relaxation, remains paramount. Such aims pose an enormous challenge to all those – whether organisations or individuals – whose policies and practices impinge upon the well being of the countryside. Rising to this challenge also involves change – in attitudes, in philosophy and in work practices.
- 2.3 The need for people who work in the countryside to acquire and develop new skills and knowledge is greater than ever. They must become increasingly aware of, and sensitive to, today's demands for a much more 'multi-purpose' countryside. In this report we are primarily concerned with addressing such needs and demands both now and for the future. And in doing so we aim to improve both the quality and the quantity of training that will be required. One thing seems clear to us at the outset: the provision of education and training currently available is neither sufficient in quantity nor adequate in quality to enable a proper response to the countryside management challenge of the 1990s – and beyond.
- 2.4 Whilst traditional values in, and perceptions of, the countryside undergo radical change, so too does the climate for training in general. There is an increasing awareness of the need for better trained people in all walks of life. A number of recent initiatives point to a new

degree of urgency and purpose: for example, two government White Papers on employment and training during 1988²; a national review of vocational qualifications under the auspices of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ)³; the introduction of Employment Training (ET); the establishment of an environmental lead industry body – the Council for Occupational Standards and Qualifications in Environmental Conservation (COSQUEC); and the proposed Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs)⁴. These all mark a welcome trend towards a far better appreciation of the role and importance of training and development linked to work. Changing demographic and economic trends are also adding impetus to the need for such training to help with filling job vacancies, bridging the skills gap, and re-training staff to develop new skills.



The countryside has seen rapid and far-reaching changes.

- 2.5 The momentum to stimulate training activity and awareness is gathering in all sectors of the economy. We hope our report will provide a boost to this process in the countryside sector. Later in the report we consider in detail the particular training needs of countryside staff, together with a number of issues affecting training in those organisations involved in countryside conservation and recreation. But at the outset we feel it is important to clarify our stance on some wider aspects, and broadly define the context for our report by first considering the following questions.

- What do we mean by countryside?
- How has it changed?
- Who are the people who live in, work in, visit and enjoy the countryside?
- Who manages the countryside?
- Who are 'countryside staff'?
- What does their work entail?

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COUNTRYSIDE?

- 2.6 The clear distinction between 'town' and 'country' that existed in the first half of this century is no longer so apparent. Simple definitions of 'countryside' are not possible. Britain is a small and densely populated country where almost every square yard of land has been modified by human activity over several thousands of years. The influence of large urban populations over the past century has encroached upon both intensively farmed lowlands and the remote upland regions. In their wake have come radical new developments and values, further blurring the separate identity of urban and rural. Nowadays there is a huge range of land uses over an equally huge variety of countryside, as seen when contrasting the exposed windswept uplands of central Wales or the northern Pennines with the sheltered valleys and woodlands of southern England. So when we use the term 'countryside', we do so in its widest sense – and, importantly, to encompass the more developed parts of the countryside where villages, small towns and the influence of the urban fringe reaches.
- 2.7 Britain's countryside includes not only the spectacular areas of beautiful or scientifically important land designated as national parks, heritage coasts, sites of special scientific interest or areas of outstanding natural beauty but also the unspectacular, but nonetheless cherished and familiar, local footpath or patch of woodland or common on the edge of town. All are used for fresh air and enjoyment, as a source of mental and physical refreshment and spiritual uplift. In taking such a broad definition of what, for us, constitutes countryside, we are at the same time drawing attention to a similarly broad spectrum of people working within it to

promote its values for conservation and recreation. We are concerned as much with the work – and therefore training – of a voluntary warden in a country park as we are with the most senior staff member of a statutory or voluntary countryside body or authority.

A COUNTRYSIDE OF CHANGE

- 2.8 'The countryside has a popular image of unchanging tranquility. This is almost part of our difficulty because we have to learn to appreciate that the countryside is in fact changing rapidly⁵.
- Change in the countryside is not new. It has always been changing – and will always do so. But for some time there has been a widespread general concern about the nature, scale and pace of current change. A number of attempts to prevent, control or manage this change have been made over the past 40 years, with varying degrees of success.
- 2.9 Modern agricultural activities are still considered to be the most important influence on land use change in the countryside. Mechanisation, abandonment of traditional husbandry practices, concentration of crop and stock production, 'agri-business' specialisation, amalgamation of holdings, and huge reductions in the farm workforce have all had a major impact on the structure of the countryside. Farm land has been lost to housing and other urban-related development, and recently the need to curb agricultural production is bringing its own smaller scale revolution. The report of the Countryside Policy Review Panel in 1987 covered these aspects in detail⁶. Importantly, it highlighted the fact that current and future land use changes are creating many new opportunities for conservation and recreation through diversified enterprises, removal of land from agricultural production, and through more environmentally sensitive farming practices.
- 2.10 Forestry development has also had a considerable influence during the past 70 years. Since 1919, well over a million hectares of forest

have been planted by state and private forestry interests. There has also been public concern about the impact of such afforestation on the landscape and nature conservation. This has brought about a recognition of the need for a change of emphasis within the forestry industry. As with farming, the concept of multi-purpose woodland is now accepted as providing further opportunities to combine conservation, informal recreation and access in the countryside with timber production. These opportunities bring in their wake new types of employment and the need for new skills and better training.

- 2.11 Many other activities have contributed to a variety of physical, social and economic changes in the countryside. Mineral extraction, water collection, power generation, new roads and motorways, and the use of land for military training have left – and continue to leave – their particular imprint. They have often led to conflict between conservation priorities, the needs of rural communities and the sectoral interests involved. Yet, paradoxically, some have led to new opportunities for conservation and recreation. Flooded mineral workings can create a new leisure facility for water sports or nature conservation – or both, and new roads can dramatically improve access to remoter rural areas, for example.
- 2.12 Another major factor has been the demand for land for housing and industrial development. This has continued apace throughout the 1980s with considerable movement of population from town to countryside or inner city to urban fringe. Currently the countryside of southern England is facing intense pressure to accommodate new housing developments in both existing and proposed new towns and villages: even some remote rural areas are now experiencing population growth⁷.

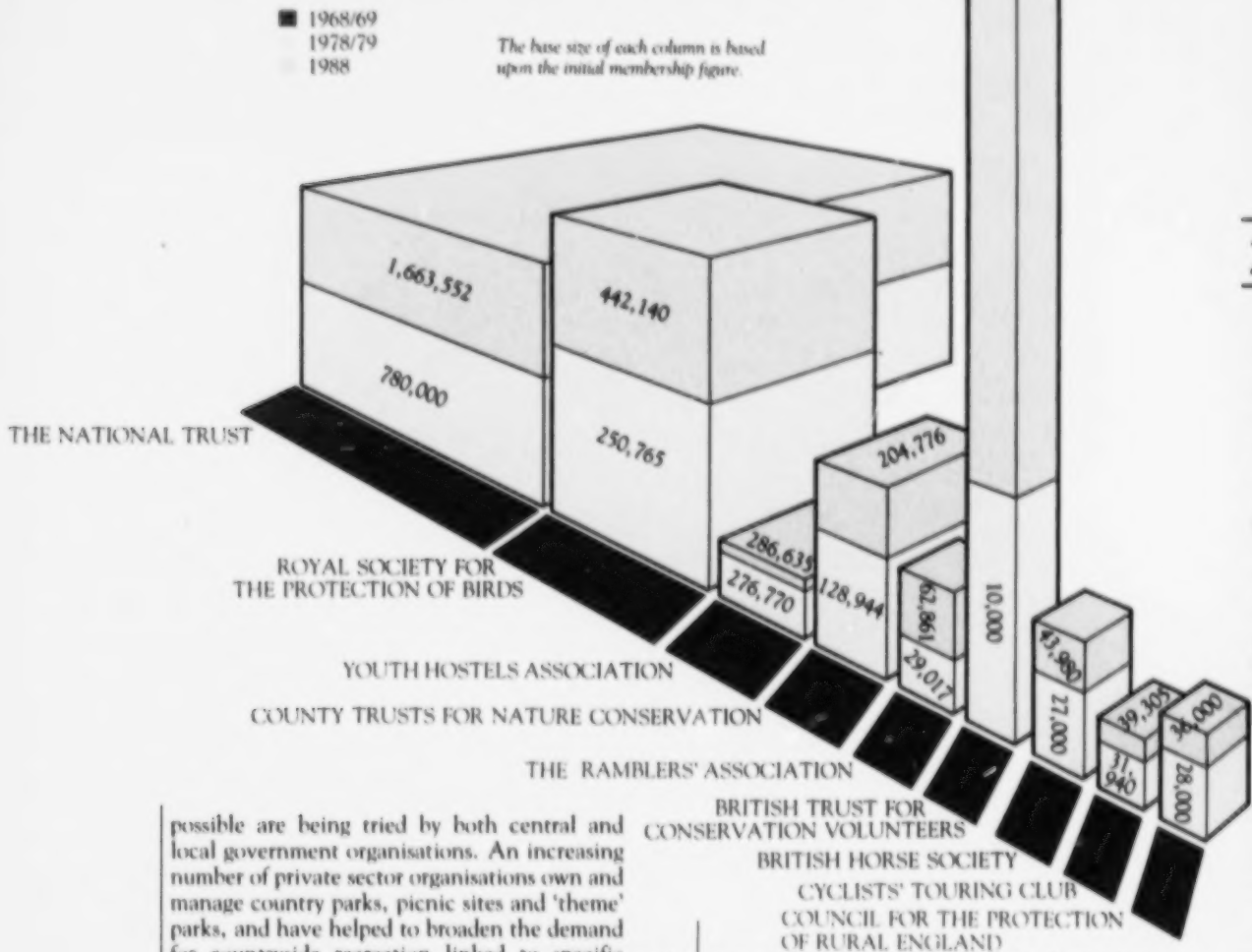
PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- 2.13 Whilst we fully recognise the fundamental importance of the countryside as a productive resource, our prime concern is to address the training needs of those who manage the

countryside in all its diversity of interests. To respond adequately to people's expectations of a varied, attractive, multi-purpose countryside, such individuals need to be trained to develop policies and implement work practices in tune with these expectations. Increasingly, people will use the countryside for more purposes and in a greater variety of ways – as a place of work, as a place to live, as a place to visit, and as a place simply to enjoy life.

- 2.14 The rural economy is no longer synonymous with that of farming and forestry. In many apparently rural villages those directly employed in farming and forestry are now in a minority. Yet in the more remote rural areas these industries still predominate as employers. However, the economic base of the countryside has broadened considerably in recent years and it is now a workplace for many employed in a range of occupations. Rural employment now includes manufacturing, food processing, timber products, service industries, retailing and tourism and leisure⁸.
- 2.15 At the same time, changing social and demographic trends, the often-regarded 'better quality' of rural living and improved transport and communications networks, mean that the countryside is also home to many people who work in, or have retired from, urban areas. The increasing demand for housing in smaller towns and villages, from both commuters and retired people, has largely utilised existing housing stock and had far-reaching social and economic implications for the longer established rural inhabitants. Newcomers often have high expectations of the countryside as a residential and recreational environment. Together with townspeople visiting the countryside in their leisure time, all these changes are placing new and increasing demands on the countryside.
- 2.16 These demands are central to our brief in looking at future training needs. We should also be clear about recreational trends and their implications for the countryside. New approaches aimed at promoting a wider variety of recreational opportunities and encouraging new enterprises amongst as wide a public as

Figure 1
GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP OF VOLUNTARY
CONSERVATION AND COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION ORGANISATIONS



possible are being tried by both central and local government organisations. An increasing number of private sector organisations own and manage country parks, picnic sites and 'theme' parks, and have helped to broaden the demand for countryside recreation linked to specific attractions. Many visitors to the countryside derive immense enjoyment from simply looking at the scenery, either during a drive or when taking a short walk. More active pastimes such as climbing, long-distance walking, horse riding, cycling and water-based activities are also growing in popularity, as indicated in the growing membership of voluntary countryside recreation organisations. The growing public interest in the countryside as a recreational resource has strengthened the demand for better access, development of facilities, accommodation and the provision of information. Beyond all this is the burgeoning tourist industry at both the national and the international level, bringing with it yet more pressure on the countryside and its people.

2.17 A common strand is the need for more access to the countryside, both in the sense of getting to it and when moving around within it. This has become an important public issue and, in addition, there are growing pressures to accommodate noisy or intrusive sports in the countryside, such as scrambling, clay-pigeon shooting, micro-light flying and 'adventure games'. On the other hand, the desire to experience 'wilderness' and to have unrestricted freedom to roam in upland areas is equally important to others.

2.18 The enormous growth in awareness to protect and conserve the natural environment is now permeating all levels of society and is part of a growing global awareness. The substantial increase in the areas of land designated for

landscape or nature conservation reasons over the past 20 years is evidence of the importance now attached to such values. The number of voluntary groups concerned with a wide range of countryside recreation, conservation and environmental issues has increased enormously – another indicator of public concern for a better environment. Figure 1 gives an indication of the growth in membership of several such organisations over a 20-year period.

WHO MANAGES THE COUNTRYSIDE?

- 2.19 The far-reaching changes that are affecting the countryside are reflected in the varying roles and needs of people working within it. The concept of managing the countryside for conservation and recreation, as distinct from managing the land for agriculture or forestry, has largely developed over the past 20 years or so, although it may well complement the estate management practices carried out by the traditional guardians of the countryside: the farmers and landowners. There is a legislative framework behind this development. Section 11 of the Countryside Act 1968 required all government departments and public bodies to "have regard to the desirability of conserving the natural beauty and amenity of the countryside". The benefits from managing the countryside for other purposes was given further emphasis during the 1980s through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, its 1984 amendments, and the Agriculture Act 1986. Such legislation provided a framework for the mainly voluntary approach to securing conservation and recreation aims on both public and private land.

- 2.20 The agricultural industry, in responding to calls for more conservation conscious land management, has set up Farming and Wildlife Advisory Groups in every county, and most of these employ advisers to promote practical conservation among farmers and landowners. The Agricultural Development Advisory Scheme (ADAS) employs a number of specialist conservation advisers within the twelve designated environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs). Since

the early 1970s, the regional water authorities and Forestry Commission have been required to extend their activities, in support of conservation and recreation. Both now employ a substantial number of staff as wardens to help manage the countryside in their care, and encourage public access, enjoyment and safety.

- 2.21 The technique of area countryside management promoted by the Commission developed during the 1970s, initially in the Lake District National Park⁹ and then extended to the urban fringe. Area countryside management projects operate at the local level, revolving round the appointment of a project officer acting as a focus to conserve and enhance the countryside and help people enjoy it. Working in partnership with others, the project officer can provide quick, effective, non-bureaucratic and inexpensive solutions to small-scale problems and opportunities. This technique has been applied throughout the country in differing situations with more than 100 such projects now well established, bringing together private landowners, voluntary organisations, communities and public bodies.

- 2.22 When we refer to countryside management within the context of this report we mean more than the technique described above. Countryside management is seen as the management of the whole of the countryside to accommodate many uses, including conservation and recreation interests. Many people, either as individuals or as organisations, have an opportunity to shape the management of the countryside, some directly, some indirectly. In this report we are concerned with those who directly manage the countryside for conservation and recreation, recognising them as 'countryside staff'.

WHO ARE 'COUNTRYSIDE STAFF'?

- 2.23 The picture that emerges is of a diversity of organisations and bodies employing, in a variety of ways, a substantial number of people working increasingly towards trying to manage the 'whole' countryside. Their aim must be to reconcile the demands of agriculture, forestry

ARTS & RECREATION GROUP PROJECT OFFICER THAMESDOWN COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE

Salary up to £13,000 plus
essential car user allowance of

ECO SURVEYS

Urgently Required
EXPERIENCED BOTANICAL & ORNITHOLOGICAL

for river corridor and coastal survey in U and Pembrokeshire. The survey is an essential starting 1st April. Candidates should send CVs to:

HEAD RANGER

Up to £11,475

Could You Lead A Team Of 14 Rangers In One Of The North West's Loveliest Country Parks?

With 1,200 acres of Cheshire countryside

MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

We are the only conservation body concerned with all aspects of the marine environment.

WE NEED an energetic and outgoing

DIRECTOR

(Salary about £14,000)

play a leading role in developing and overseeing the Society and its activities

Kerrier Groundwork Trust

The newly established charitable company, a part of the national Groundwork network, has been formed to help to regenerate and enhance the area in partnership with public, private and voluntary agencies. The District of Kerrier is located in the east of Cornwall, and has both rural and urban characteristics. There are opportunities including current land reclamation, conservation of town centres and industrial estates. Following the appointment of the Executive Director two key posts in a team which will form the core of the trust are available:

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT



Protecting the Environment

SENIOR FIELD OFFICER

CUMBRIA
BASED IN WINDERMERE
Salary £8,500-£10,500 pa

BYCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) is the largest national voluntary organisation promoting and organising conservation work by volunteers.

Kent Trust for Nature Conservation

Kent's leading nature conservation charity
CONSERVATION OFFICER
Based in Ashford, Kent, this exciting position has a local remit. The responsible officer will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Kent Trust for Nature Conservation.

The Woodland Trust requires TWO ASSISTANT REGIONAL OFFICERS

The Woodland Trust wishes dynamic and motivated people of Assistant Regional Officer regions, to assist with woodland management duties.

The newly created post in 1 England will have a special emphasis on managing resources in many projects. The successful candidate will be

Mersey Valley Partnership

RANGERS (3 posts)
Scale 3/3 £8,301-£9,700 includes 30% addition for unsocial hours

ASSISTANT RANGERS (3 posts)
Scale 2 £6,301-£8,802 includes 30% addition for unsocial hours

LONDON WILDLIFE TRUST

Requires
BOROUGH OFFICER/WARDEN
Southwark (BORW)

To be responsible for all aspects of managing the Borough's two Trust Nature Reserves and to provide a development within the local community. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Borough's two Trust Nature Reserves and to provide a development within the local community. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Borough's two Trust Nature Reserves and to provide a development within the local community.

LASH WORKER

£10,000-£12,000
The post is to be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Borough's two Trust Nature Reserves and to provide a development within the local community. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Borough's two Trust Nature Reserves and to provide a development within the local community.

RECREATION DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

THE NEW THETFORD FOREST PARK
Benton Downham, Brandon, Suffolk

Salary a scale of £10,000 - £14,000 according to qualifications and experience
The post is to be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Borough's two Trust Nature Reserves and to provide a development within the local community. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Borough's two Trust Nature Reserves and to provide a development within the local community.

Figure 3
RANGE OF
COUNTRYSIDE
STAFF POSTS
WITHIN PEAK
DISTRICT
NATIONAL PARK

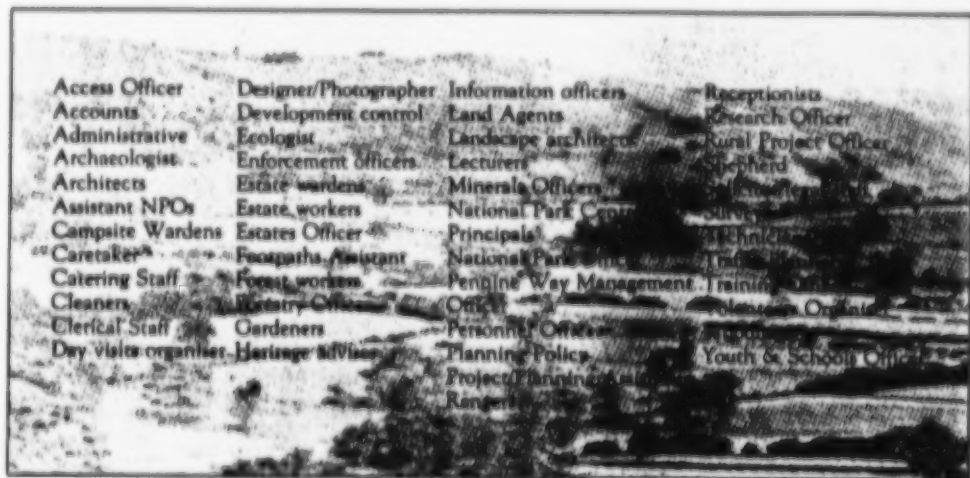


Figure 2
SELECTION OF COUNTRYSIDE STAFF
JOB VACANCIES

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

and land use development in all its forms with the needs of the people who, as 'customers' wish to use and enjoy that countryside; and to ensure that proper regard is given to landscape and nature conservation. It is these people, be they full-time staff, volunteers or self-employed, who are our main concern. Such countryside staff include people working for national parks, local authority countryside or recreation departments, the National Trust, people involved with land managing and campaigning voluntary organisations, employees of statutory environmental bodies and government agencies, private sector landowners and many more. Figure 2 gives a few examples of the diversity of countryside staff posts, and Figure 3 illustrates the range of posts within one particular organisation, indicating the broad range of people involved in countryside management. Such people work at all levels from senior policy makers and directors, to Youth Training Scheme (YTS) trainees. They may be new in their jobs, or long established. They may possess a lifetime's experience of conservation work, or none if they have moved recently from another occupation unrelated to the countryside. All have different backgrounds, experiences, skills and knowledge.

- 2.24 It is difficult to estimate just how many people are employed in this way. In 1988, the Countryside Commission estimated that more than 1000 were supported directly by contributions from its grant aid, and several thousands more were in jobs funded either wholly or partly by other organisations. To these must be added thousands of volunteers who also give their time, energy, enthusiasm and expertise. Within this report we refer to all of them as 'countryside staff'. However we should make it clear that while we appreciate the fundamental and indispensable role of farmers, landowners and foresters in making and shaping the countryside, they fall largely outside our remit and definition of 'countryside staff'. Their prime role is as custodians and managers of the productive countryside. While an increasing number are giving active consideration to conservation and recreation interests, it is

uncommon for this to be their principal concern. Many of the comments and recommendations made within this report, however, will be of relevance to farmers, foresters and other land managers, and we hope that those who have an interest in the education and training of such people will be able to make use of the results of our deliberations.

COUNTRYSIDE STAFF – THE NATURE OF THEIR WORK

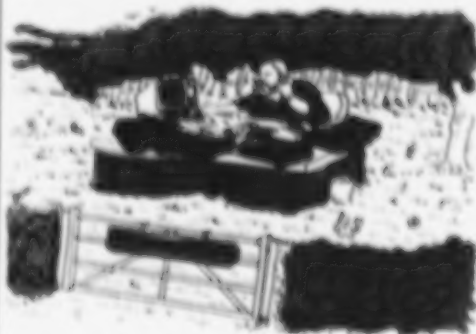
- 2.25 As we indicated earlier, countryside conservation and recreation management is an expanding area of employment. The nature of the work is multi-disciplinary – a characteristic reinforced by people entering the field from a wide range of backgrounds and possessing a variety of work experience and qualifications. Countryside staff may work alone, in teams or in specialist departments. Some individuals may be geographically isolated, based in remote rural areas distant from their employing organisation. Others are isolated within their work, being perhaps a lone specialist within an organisation whose main business or interest is not that of countryside conservation or recreation management.
- 2.26 There is often much competition for countryside jobs, with many individuals applying for each vacancy. Many applicants hold higher academic and professional qualifications while others may have a deep personal interest in, or commitment to, the countryside, and possibly considerable voluntary experience, but no specific educational qualifications or training. At present there is no single professional body concerned solely with countryside conservation and recreation management, and some feel that countryside management has a low status for this reason. The lack of a 'professional' status is frequently regarded as a barrier to promotion and career development, and there is no clear career pathway within countryside management work. Individuals may have to move sideways in an organisation or zigzag between organisations to develop new skills and experience. We consider these factors more fully later.

NEW ROLES, NEW SKILLS – THE NEED FOR TRAINING

2.27 The way in which the countryside is used and perceived by people is changing rapidly. Not only are new forms of employment developing, but there is also a broadening of the responsibilities and remits of many countryside staff. For example, the work of wardens and rangers was originally that of patrolling areas open to public access, but now embraces liaison, interpretation, conservation management, volunteer coordination and education, in addition to a range of other duties. It is clear that all countryside staff now need to possess a wide range of skills related to the multi-purpose management of the resource. The demands placed upon the countryside are becoming increasingly more complex and, to balance these demands, there is a need to develop countryside staff who have a broad perspective on the countryside and its uses, and are sensitive to the needs of people.

2.28 These developments are accompanied by considerable change in the institutional and economic context within which countryside staff have to operate. For example, employers of countryside staff are not only having to initiate new policies and work practices, but also must be able to compete more effectively for funding and support within today's increasingly free market economy. They must respond to the demands of an increasingly active and discerning public. Private, public and voluntary sector organisations are extending into new areas of work and developing fresh projects – but have to realise their activities with limited and often fewer resources. Political priorities continue to dictate a shift of finances and responsibilities away from public agencies and towards voluntary and private ones. Organisations such as the Countryside and Rural Development Commissions and Nature Conservancy Council are themselves experiencing tightly constrained budgets and require proper monitoring of the cost effectiveness of their grants for projects. The effective use of such limited resources to meet targets depends in turn upon the experience, skills and knowledge of people managing

and implementing countryside projects. New stresses have been imposed upon individuals and organisations in an increasingly competitive market place. A consequence is that countryside staff are frequently involved in new areas of work but have rarely received relevant and applicable training to help them to cope with such change.



New roles, new skills – the need for training

3 A NEW DEAL FOR TRAINING?

In this chapter we set out our understanding of training in general terms and its place in relation to countryside management. Attitudes to training are of fundamental importance and we look at how these are being influenced by recent developments – some of great importance to the future of countryside staff. In the second part of the chapter we use our review of education and training in those fields specifically within our remit and comment on their current role and future potential.

This chapter should be read in conjunction with the review in Appendix 2.



TRAINING – WHAT IS IT?

- 3.1 Training is a means of developing the potential of both organisations and individuals. It enables staff and volunteers to learn new skills, improve existing ones, acquire knowledge, and take on new responsibilities. It helps people adapt to change and it can change attitudes. Training can also enhance career prospects, lead to qualifications and, above all, help people to feel confident that they know how to do their job well. Training can take place at any stage of life or a career and is relevant to all staff, paid or voluntary, regardless of their role or status. Training should be a continuing and flexible process, and an integral and essential part of an organisation's and a person's development.
- 3.2 The terms 'training' and 'education' are often confused. We consider there is a seamless join between the two with education being the early stage of a continuing process of learning. The development of skills and acquisition of knowledge is then enhanced throughout life by training opportunities and experiences. Training should not be equated just with seminars and courses. Good training takes a wide variety of forms, and should include opportunities for learning while working (on-the-job training), work experience, short and long courses, workshops, seminars and conferences, job exchanges and secondments, study visits, and self-study or distance learning. Appendix I lists the main methods commonly used, and during the progression of a career a number of these should be brought into play.
- 3.3 To maximise the benefit of training it needs to be carefully tuned to an organisation's or an individual's needs. People's needs vary according to their experience and skills, the nature of their work and the aims of their employer. The diversity of work carried out by countryside staff, together with the wide range of organisations involved in countryside management means that it is impossible to advocate a 'blueprint' training programme. Training needs must be assessed carefully for each organisation and each individual.
- 3.4 That, in turn, demands a firm commitment to training from both employer and employee. Without this the process of assessing and correctly identifying training needs, and then providing and evaluating its effects, will either not happen, or be an unsatisfactory experience for all concerned. Inevitably such a commitment requires resources of staff time and funding but training must be regarded as an essential investment in the future. Carefully planned and resourced it can yield huge dividends for the benefit of organisations and individuals alike. That has been said many times before, but given the pace of change now affecting our society as a whole – and the supply of labour in particular – it has never been more relevant. We must ask whether we can afford not to train.

CURRENT ATTITUDES TO TRAINING

- 3.5 There are a number of obstacles to a better approach to training being more widely adopted. These are rooted in attitudes, especially in misconceptions about the value of training to the organisation and to the individual. Attitudes to the training of countryside staff must be looked at against a backdrop of perceptions of training generally in Britain. Studies¹ have revealed a high degree of complacency at senior management levels with training rarely regarded as an investment, but rather as an overhead to be cut when finances are under pressure. It is often viewed as something forced on a company as a reaction to new developments, such as changes in legislation or the installation of new equipment. In many instances, training is given no priority within the corporate strategy and responsibility for it is devolved to relatively junior staff. Frequently it is regarded as being the work of the personnel department only and not the responsibility of line managers or the immediate employing section. Training may be seen as a method of 'correcting' an employee's 'faults', or solving a problem that may be symptomatic of bad management or organisational planning.
- 3.6 Many organisations fail to plan and budget for training and make no allocation for a com-



There are many misconceptions about training.

ponent of training time in work programmes. When training is provided, the failure to evaluate its effects weakens any argument for making increased resources available. Some employers even fail to recognise the importance of staff training in contributing to career progression. This is particularly unfortunate in respect of education or experience obtained prior to new employment. Far too often these are regarded as no more than criteria for selecting applicants rather than as foundations upon which skills and knowledge can be built.

3.7 It is our view that all too frequently these attitudes apply to those employing countryside staff. Job descriptions are increasingly concerned with responsibility and accountability, with staff developing their roles as conservation needs change. Training provision is failing to keep up. Many staff are expected to develop skills and knowledge as they work, learning by successes and (often costly) mistakes. As a symptom of this, staff express anxiety at being 'dropped in' to new roles and, concerned about the need to do their jobs well, become increasingly dissatisfied with the absence of proper advice and support.

3.8 The nature of countryside work adds difficulty to planning and organising appropriate training. Countryside staff often have to work alone or in isolation from others with similar roles, and are frequently based in remote rural locations. Opportunities to learn through

working with a more experienced member of staff, or by meeting people working in other occupations and organisations, can be limited. Making provision for adequate in-service training away from the workplace assumes greater importance in these circumstances. This is especially true of the need to make and renew contacts and enable a network of people with similar roles to be built up. Unless tackled at an organisational level the onus for identifying training needs in such situations is frequently placed on the individual with little guidance from a line manager. Small conservation organisations, in particular, may lack staff with the ability to identify training needs. Although larger bodies may use specialist trainers, or possibly training administrators, such people often have little or no knowledge of training related to countryside needs.

PRESSURE FOR CHANGE

3.9 The main developments that will form the context for more and better provision of training over the next decade are as follows.

3.10 First, the issues raised by demographic change. During the 1990s the population of working age will grow more slowly than during the 1970s and '80s, with the numbers of 16- and 19-year-olds falling by over a million between 1983 and 1993². These changes mean that employers will increasingly have to consider re-training their present staff rather than being able to recruit recently trained and qualified young people who will simply not be there in sufficient numbers. It will also encourage the re-training and adaptation of the skills of older, experienced workers; more women; those from ethnic minorities; and the long-term unemployed – groups whose potential has been sadly ignored in the past.

3.11 Second, declining enrolments in certain sectors of further and higher education have already caused many institutions to rethink their courses. They are busily restructuring and marketing them both to try to maintain student numbers and to appeal to wider audiences such

- as in-service trainees. Many polytechnics, colleges of higher education, and agricultural and horticultural colleges are now aiming to offer broader based courses. We look at the increasing number of courses providing formal training in countryside-related subjects in Appendix 2 and later in this report.
- 3.12 Third, there is a greater realisation, backed by government policy, that education must encourage the acquisition of a broad foundation of skills, knowledge and understanding, which will allow much freer adaptation to new priorities and opportunities. The Education Reform Act 1988 requires a national curriculum of core and foundation subjects to be established, supported by standards testing and assessment. These developments are augmented by a number of related government initiatives to encourage schools to develop links with local employers, and to assist in providing advice and vocational experience for school students.
- 3.13 Fourth, a number of former Manpower Services Commission (MSC, now the Training Agency) funded schemes, originally established to tackle unemployment and provide work experience, have developed into training schemes within their own right. Many employers who took on large numbers of MSC-funded workers to carry out a variety of estate management, education and interpretation tasks needed to address their training needs. Organisations participating in Employment Training (ET) are required to implement a process of analysing training need, providing appropriate training and work experience, and assessing the progress of each trainee. The status of Approved Training organisations (ATO) is awarded to those Youth Training Scheme (YTS) and ET agencies that can satisfy strict criteria: these include the training of supervisors, proper programme design, adherence to health and safety standards, practising equal opportunities, and involving trainees in the evaluation of their training programmes. Over 3,000 organisations now possess ATO status, and these criteria should help to raise further the standard and awareness of training generally. Such experiences have raised an awareness of training needs and opportunities of other staff and volunteers.
- 3.14 A fifth factor was the establishment in 1986 of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) and its work towards developing a system of nationally recognised qualifications with clearly defined standards of competence. Education and training providers are moving towards a coordinated and standardised scheme of accreditation within the NCVQ framework. We examine this in greater detail in Chapter 8.
- 3.15 Finally, and most recently, the publication in December 1988 of the White Paper, *Employment for the 1990s*², provides yet another important stimulus for the development of better training opportunities over the next few years. It contains a number of radical proposals including the establishment of a National Training Task Force and the setting up of local Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). The general effect of the White Paper's proposals is to shift the onus even further onto employers to identify and contribute to a more coherent pattern of training in future.
- 3.16 All of these issues are causing employers to think more about training. They are stimulating the ideas and activities of training providers, and staff are also beginning to respond more actively to these expanding opportunities.
- CURRENT TRAINING PROVISION
- 3.17 But what education and training opportunities are currently available to countryside staff? Our review of training has revealed a rich variety, but they are unevenly distributed, not available in every subject area and practices differ markedly.
- 3.18 The main sources of education and training are as follows, although in practice there are often overlaps between them:
- full-time training in the formal education sector – basic or advanced vocational

qualifications, degrees (or their equivalent) and post-graduate qualifications;

- **work experience** – prior to or during full-time employment, voluntary experience and experience in other sectors;
- **in-house training supported by employers** – work-based training including on-the-job training and in-house courses, study visits and secondments, Employment Training, Youth Training Schemes;
- **externally provided training** – including short, part-time and day-release courses, open learning, conferences, study visits and opportunities outside the UK.

Each of these has its contribution to make towards building up a national resource of expertise in countryside management. Each has its advantages and disadvantages; all are capable of major improvement.

- 3.19 One problem is that with such a vast array of different education and training opportunities in the general conservation and recreation field, it can be difficult to identify the most appropriate ones. In any case, suitable training is not always to be found in the right place, subject or form. The picture is further complicated by the lack of an accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive source of information. Few directories or databases on training comprehensively cover countryside management, so finding correct information can be time consuming and difficult: for example index words such as 'conservation' embrace entries covering 'museum exhibit conservation' and 'textile conservation' as well as 'nature conservation'. In Appendix 3 we list the main sources of information currently available in the form of published directories, computer databases and examples of regularly published programmes of training.

- 3.20 In an attempt to ease the problem, the Countryside Commission produces one of the most up-to-date and comprehensive sources of information for countryside staff training

through its *Countryside Education and Training Directory*¹. It has also commissioned the setting up of a pilot computerised Rural Training Database covering a wide range of subjects. The database has considerable scope for further development both as a way of identifying over-provision or gaps and as an information source for employers, staff and training providers. These two sources provide a useful basis for appraising the provision and distribution of training, especially with their facilities to use feedback from employers, staff and training providers to up-date and enlarge them.

- 3.21 However, all current sources of information omit details of in-house training provided by employers. This is notoriously difficult to obtain as employers rarely keep proper records. Gathering such information requires detailed discussions with managers, but we have been able to collate a reasonable sample from a number of sources, including Countryside Commission and the Association of Countryside Rangers (ACR) surveys, the Association of National Park Officers (ANPO) training working party and through members of this group. Using these we have looked at what, and how, training is currently provided through the four main sources referred to earlier. We present our findings in Appendix 2 as a general review of the prevailing situation. Here we summarise our comments with the aim of pointing to where we see deficiencies and suggesting where improvement to satisfy future needs may lie.

HOW ADEQUATE IS TODAY'S TRAINING?

- 3.22 Despite the range of education and training opportunities currently available to countryside staff, there is a good deal of feedback from all sides which suggests it would benefit from improvement in a variety of respects. We pose – and attempt to answer – several questions that underlie this need for improvement.

- Are people aware of the training that is available?

- Is there enough training – or is there perceived to be enough?
- Is it accessible to those who need it?
- Is the quality good enough?
- Is the content suitable for both today's and tomorrow's training needs?

3.23 Our review of current training has identified a number of examples of good practice and there are several areas in which improvements are happening. In-service training programmes are more frequently found, demand for good short courses is high, and many staff are now seeking further qualifications to improve their professional knowledge and job prospects. Training providers have identified countryside management as an area of training need and they are trying to meet it in a variety of ways.

Some new developments have involved close liaison with employers to ensure that new courses are relevant and up to date. A number of courses specialising in countryside management and conservation have a well-deserved reputation and are in high demand. But while some providers are carefully developing useful opportunities, others are not supplying the quality needed and some employers still provide or support very little in-service training.

3.24 The establishment of the Council for Standards and Qualifications in Environmental Conservation (COSQUEC) should help to ensure that all qualifications meet employment needs and standards. COSQUEC will establish standards of competence and ensure that there is a coordinated system of vocational qualifications for environmental conservation. The main countryside employers are represented in its membership. Its remit includes landscape, habitat and species protection and countryside recreation, and the standards it sets will guide the content and pattern of vocational qualifications in these areas.

3.25 Encouraging as these developments are, we believe there are six key areas that could benefit from improvement. We look at each in turn and in the remainder of this report take

them into account when making our recommendations.

COORDINATION OF TRAINING INFORMATION AND PROVISION

3.26 There is insufficient national coordination of training for countryside staff and few good information sources. This tends to lead to over- and under-provision of both validated and unvalidated training and confusion about what is available. Training developments often bear only a superficial relationship to present employment needs, and claims about the relevance of some courses to the potential job market in countryside management sometimes raises false expectations among students. Employers often feel that training is determined by the providers with little reference to real needs. Lack of coordination between different validating, examining and course-funding bodies means that while at some qualification levels, there are many courses, at others there may be none at all. In the longer term the work of the NCVQ should result in real improvements nationally, but in the short term, and at regional and local level there appear to be few mechanisms for coordinating training provision. This applies to short courses and other forms of training too.

STANDARDS OF QUALITY AND CONTENT

3.27 At present training content is not governed by agreed national standards so there are wide discrepancies in the way in which training providers perceive the same subjects. Without a common definition of terms, the titles of some courses can be highly misleading: for instance 'countryside management' is interpreted differently by trainers with a conservation and recreation background from those with an agricultural one. This can lead to much confusion because the skills and knowledge of holders of such a qualification, when gained through different institutions, can vary considerably. Similarly, in-service training provision differs markedly between employers. Quality control is difficult too. Almost anyone can set up non-validated training and whilst the

better quality courses may survive, along the way some people will experience poor training. On the other hand, although validated courses have to meet certain criteria, many of these are concerned more with organisational and academic aspects than with expertise and approach. Some training providers do not appear to have teaching staff with relevant experience in conservation and recreation and few have adequate staff development or recruitment policies to remedy this. Employers, trainers and staff alike have expressed dissatisfaction about this and it is seen as a major constraint to improving quality. We concur with the view that the quality of some in-house training is less than it should be, because of its non-existence, low awareness of need by employers, or poor relevance to real needs. In Chapter 4 we examine training content in more detail in relation to the key skills needed by staff.

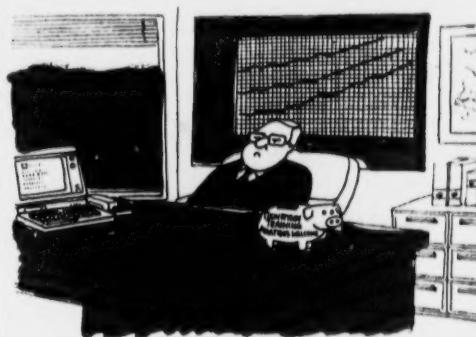
FULL AND PART-TIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

3.28 In spite of numerous opportunities to study subjects related to countryside conservation and recreation at most levels, there are few chances to specialise directly in them and woefully few opportunities for part-time study. Consequently, geographical distribution of part-time courses is poor, except for people within easy reach of the main cities, particularly London. To remedy this, further part-time opportunities are needed at all levels taking into account the findings of Chapter 4 and overcoming criticisms levelled at existing courses. The number of graduates currently exceeds the number of countryside-management related jobs and we would not advocate more degrees in total, but there is certainly scope for more part-time routes to degree and post-graduate level qualifications in aspects of countryside management. As many potential customers for part-time study would be supported by employers, it is vital that all such developments involve employers fully and take place within the NCVQ framework.

3.29 A wide view of the countryside is vital and it should be possible to take either a broad

approach on which specialisms can be built or a specialist route set in the wider context. At present, training tends either to be too broad or too narrow. At full-time degree and post-graduate levels, special aspects of countryside work, especially in planning, landscape architecture and ecology, can be studied in many places but these usually take a sectoral approach. Despite increasing numbers of specialist jobs in interpretation, environmental education and wildlife habitat management for example, there are few supporting courses. Many related subjects, such as geography, planning, environmental and leisure studies, have options in countryside management and related aspects, but can only give a superficial introduction to these aspects. We feel that there is scope for some re-direction of both general and specialist degrees and post-graduate courses. Courses must also take more account of employers' requirements for graduates with greater managerial and communication skills. In our view they would benefit from adopting the approach taken in Higher National Diploma (HND) level courses and forge closer links with employers in teaching job-related skills within an academic framework.

3.30 HND courses in countryside management are few, but with the large output of graduates who compete with HND holders for jobs, we doubt whether the job market either now or in the immediate future can support further HND level courses. However, provided that staff



Training budgets are often inadequate.

		Nature Conservancy Council	Countryside Commission	National Trust	BTCV	Groundwork Foundations and Trusts	Hampshire County Council (Countryside part of recreation department)	National Parks		
		All	Lake District	Dartmoor						
Total number of full-time staff		815	145	2,000	150	170	100	728	110	72
Organisation of training	Annual training budget as a % of staff salaries	3%	4.1%	2.5%	?	?	1%	No data	0-7% ¹	0-65% ¹
	Number of in-house specialist training staff	3	114	1	45	All staff involved	1	1	0	0
	Policy for internal training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Most	Yes	Yes
	Annual training appraisal system	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3 only	Yes	No
Training methods	Induction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Internal short courses	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	External short courses	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	External qualification courses	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Secondments	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
	YTS Scheme	Yes	No	Being developed	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	ET Scheme	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Projects and Placements	Yes	Some	No	No
	Other	Training visits, exchanges	Study visits		Exchange study visits, management development	Environmental Management Trainee Programme	Student placements, training visits	Staff exchanges for individuals		
Volunteer Training	Number of volunteers	640	0	15,000	450,000	9,839	50	No data	240 voluntary wardens	1,030
	Training provided for volunteers?	None formally	No	Yes	Yes	In-house training and BTCV courses	No	No	Yes	On task only

¹ basis for calculation of training budget varies
² records for costs of external training only

expertise and syllabus content are correctly balanced, we believe that HND courses with their mixture of practical, managerial and technical skills, combined with adequate background knowledge, come close to what employers will need over the next decade. The two specialist National Diploma (ND) courses at Merrist Wood and the Northern Colleges similarly meet employers' needs, but at a more basic level. Again job opportunities are limited at present for ND holders.

- 3.31 Paradoxically, although there is a huge amount of practical countryside conservation work to be done there are, as yet, comparatively few full-time jobs in this area and real difficulties in providing the necessary funding to support jobs and training. Consequently only limited vocational training opportunities exist. If the en-

vironmental sector can make better use of ET or if the notion of a Countryside Task Force proposed by the Countryside Commission⁴ becomes a reality, non-advanced training will need to expand considerably. At present there are only a handful of suitable courses that deal adequately with the practical skills of countryside management. Although we welcome the development of some new courses in this area, too many are heavily biased towards agricultural and estate skills, providing an incomplete background to conservation and recreation and rarely covering important skills such as communication. More general courses, National Diplomas in leisure studies for example, offer countryside recreation as an option only and are unable to give a real understanding of the knowledge and skills required. There is scope for developing vocational training in multi-

purpose woodland management; landscape and habitat surveying; management and monitoring; in both the general skills of communication and specifically in interpretive techniques and working with people. The detailed work of COSQUEC should be able to guide the content of training in these fields in future.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

- 3.32 Although we have so far concentrated on more formal training, this does not imply that in-service training supported by employers is any less important. In fact, the extent to which staff can further their job related skills and knowledge is dependent upon it. However, we have found that few employers of countryside staff have a systematic and continuing programme of training for their staff. Training provision is, on the whole, unstructured, with little analysis of real needs and a low awareness of how to develop it. Properly compiled and implemented training policies, are rare usually because training budgets are low or non-existent and training expertise is limited.
- 3.33 This is not to say that there is no training. Most employers provide at least some on-the-job training. Despite this being one of the most important training sources, it is often poorly planned, is frequently undervalued, and almost universally records are not kept of what takes place. External short courses are heavily used – but most of the full range of training methods that could be deployed in this area appear neglected (Appendix 1). Only a few organisations have a system that is anywhere near comprehensive. Figure 4 summarises the training provided by a selection of employers with an active involvement. Taken as a whole we have found some excellent practices – the employment of countryside training staff or consultants, training needs analysis, collaborative working (for example between national parks), the development of trainee schemes, and work exchanges are just some examples. Sadly, few organisations take a strategic

approach linked to the needs of the organisation, its staff and its volunteers, and there is little evaluation of what does take place.

THE ROLE OF SHORT COURSES

- 3.34 Short courses, especially residential ones, are popular with countryside staff and employers alike and are one of the most commonly used training methods. We strongly support the continued development of sponsored training by the main countryside agencies. However, we have a number of criticisms; that courses are unevenly distributed; some are oversubscribed or, in a number of subjects, non-existent; quality is variable, and few lead to any substantive qualifications. Many employers do not make full use of what short courses are available in related sectors, either because they are unaware of them or because they are considered too expensive (for instance, in management skills, information technology, and communication skills). Suitable one-day courses that can be attended locally are rare. We feel that many of these shortcomings and perceptions arise because employers rely too heavily on external short courses as a major part of training for their countryside staff. This is to some extent encouraged by grants which favour external courses over internal training programmes. The role of national short courses should be the one for which they were intended, that of supplementing and broadening in-house training, giving a national perspective.
- 3.35 Courses coordinated by national organisations tend to concentrate on a small number of centres – generally those that have consistently provided high-quality training at a reasonable cost. Widening the distribution of these courses would be helpful, but currently the scope is limited by a shortage of experienced providers, and consideration must be given to quality as well as quantity. We have evidence that a standard lower than that currently provided by national courses is not acceptable. For there to be a wider distribution of courses, training providers must develop better training skills and gain experience in

countryside management. The more experienced providers work closely with employers to build up experience so that the training they offer meets their needs. Prospective providers would benefit from adopting a similar approach.

THE USE OF OTHER APPROACHES TO TRAINING

3.36 Other training opportunities, such as open learning, secondments, study visits, conferences and seminars, are neither fully recognised nor used properly as training. Open learning is expensive to develop but is accessible to most people with a radio or TV and helps to overcome problems of geographical isolation. However, where suitable sources are available, such as those from the Open University, these are not fully used and only occasionally form part of an employer's training programme. If such courses could lead to qualifications this would be an incentive for their increased use. Conferences and seminars are widely used for up-dating purposes and to give a wider perspective on current issues, but organisers rarely set out to maximise their training potential – for example by setting clear objectives that are reflected in the programme design. As a result many potentially valuable events are seen as being informal or prestigious events rather than as part of a training programme. Similar views exist about the value of study visits, particularly if they are abroad. Although there are limited opportunities for individual or group visits we consider that, carefully prepared, they can be an effective means of developing contacts, advancing thinking and solving problems.

3.37 In considering training we must also look to practices and opportunities elsewhere in the world. We have already benefitted from the experience of others, particularly in the USA, and the advent of the single European market in 1992 provides a valuable opportunity to exchange experiences and develop both pre- and in-service training on a European scale. Management for conservation and recreation is a major international issue and we have much

expertise to share. UK countryside organisations are already advising others abroad on developing training, and a number of study visits have taken place, but there is room for much greater collaboration.

3.38 From our review we find that:

- there is a need for training, especially in view of the national surge of interest in training;
- more and better structured training for countryside staff is required, particularly in-service programmes, part-time courses and training methods other than courses.
- provision must be better coordinated;
- information about countryside training needs improvement.

4 KEY SKILLS AND CORE KNOWLEDGE

As we have established earlier, to work effectively in the contemporary countryside all staff must appreciate their role as managers. In this chapter we examine the broad scope of countryside management, and identify the essential skills and knowledge that we feel all countryside staff should possess. We have referred to these with the terms 'key skills' and 'core knowledge', and strongly feel that relevant training should aim to support their development throughout a career.



THE SKILLS OF MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Management is about getting things done. It involves planning, organising, responding, directing and controlling activities, resources and people. Its objectives will vary according to the type of work to be done and the policies, practices – and crucially – the attitudes of the employer. Countryside management requires the knowledge, skills and experience to tackle all sorts of questions: for instance, what, if anything, needs to be done? Why should it be done? How can it be done? What are the implications for the countryside and for the people who use it? To answer these questions, countryside staff need to be able to see their work within a broad framework, and recognise that they act as managers in three respects:

- first, managing the physical resource of the countryside itself;
- second, managing for the people using the countryside ie the customer;
- third, managing the system to enable the first two to be achieved.



Managing the countryside, for people, within a system.

- 4.2 To carry out the different tasks within these three strands of management, countryside staff need to possess three sets of skills:

- interpersonal skills,
- organisational skills,
- practical and/or technical skills.

The first two are sets of skills we have termed 'key skills', which all countryside staff need to have. They are often referred to as **generic skills** and are transferrable and applicable in many occupations. Our evidence suggests that they have been neglected in respect of training for countryside staff, and many people have failed to recognise their importance in enabling staff to manage the countryside for people. Each of these sets of skills can be examined in a little more detail.

- 4.3 **Inter-personal skills** are vital 'people skills' essential for those working with others be they managers, full-time staff or volunteers. There are three main groups of skills.

- **Supervisory and staff management skills** – including identifying tasks, delegating duties, giving feedback, motivating, leading, teaching and disciplining.
- **Communication skills** – including knowing what to communicate (and what not to!) both verbally and non-verbally; using the telephone, writing, illustrating, speaking in public, listening and negotiating.
- **Customer care** – including understanding the different needs of countryside users and residents, together with those of farmers and landowners; the needs and expectations of the public, children, the elderly, disabled and ethnic groups; and health and safety for other users of the countryside as well as promotion of and use of public relations.

These skills are used both when managing for people, and when managing the system.

- 4.4 The second set of key skills are **organisational skills**, essentially personal in nature and necessary for effective day to day management. They overlap to some extent with people skills, since some involve communicating with others in order to get a job done. They should include the ability:

- to **identify** goals, targets, standards and objectives;

- to **plan** how the work is to be carried out, identify and tackle problems;

- to **organise** time, staff, activities, tools, vehicles, resources and coordinate all of these.

These skills are necessary to ensure that all the work in hand, tasks and plans are implemented, and then the results reviewed and evaluated. They are used when managing the system.

- 4.5 **Practical and technical skills** are those most specific to a particular job. Although essential in enabling a task to be carried out, they are not generic skills and will vary according to the individual responsibilities. Because of their varying nature, we are unable to state which skills are essential practical or technical skills for countryside staff, but as an indicator they include practical estate skills of walling, fencing, footpath work, use, care and maintenance of tools; and technical skills of surveying, design, site management planning and interpretation of legal or technical documents. Employers expect staff to possess certain of these skills prior to coming into post, and others may be learned, or developed to a higher standard while in post. They are essentially skills for managing the countryside resource. Figure 5 gives an extract from a job description for a Heritage Coast Officer. It shows the essential practical, interpersonal and organisational skills required to carry out the work.

Figure 5

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR HERITAGE COAST PROJECT OFFICER SHOWING ORGANISATIONAL, INTERPERSONAL, PRACTICAL AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Practical and technical skills.....
Organisational skills
Interpersonal skills

JOB TITLE HERITAGE COAST OFFICER	
JOB DESCRIPTION To be responsible for the day to day running of the project to promote and manage the heritage coast. Principle duties will include the supervision of two wardens, public relations, liaison with the National Trust, county and district council departments, preparation and overseeing of programmes of work and projects.	
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES PROMOTE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE HERITAGE COAST IDENTIFY WAYS OF MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA. SUPERVISE HERITAGE COAST WARDENS	MAIN TASKS ORGANISE AND PROMOTE PUBLIC MEETINGS, GUIDED WALKS, DISPLAYS, LEAFLETS AND OTHER INTERPRETIVE MATERIAL. MAKE CONTACTS WITH COUNTRYSIDE ASSOCIATION ORGANISATIONS. IDENTIFY DEMANDS AND NEEDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND VISITORS. MONITOR CHANGE AND PREPARE FUTURE EFFECTS PREPARE DEFENSE MANAGEMENT PLANS, LIAISE WITH AND ADVISE LOCAL AUTHORITIES. IDENTIFY TRENDS AND PLAN WORK PROGRAMMES IDENTIFY TRAINING NEEDS AND PROVIDE TRAINING AS NECESSARY OVERSEE PRACTICAL MANAGEMENT WORK WITH REGARD TO HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS.

CORE KNOWLEDGE

- 4.6 Having established that countryside staff should possess the three sets of skills outlined above, there is a need to be able to apply such skills within a broad framework. In order to understand the context of a job, countryside staff need to have a 'core knowledge' of a range of countryside issues. This needs to be allied to an understanding of the purpose and direction of their employing organisation or department. We think that present training provision is far too tied to the skills-training needs of the individual in a specific job. To ensure that training is flexible, forward looking and helpful, and that staff effort is directed to a common purpose, then the interpersonal, organisational and practical skills must be developed upon a sound core or foundation of relevant knowledge.

- 4.7 Firstly, it is essential that countryside staff and volunteers can see their work taking place in the changing countryside. They need to be aware of the wider implications of their work, and the impact that the decisions they take will have in the countryside. This entails a basic knowledge of the local countryside - its landscape, wildlife and patterns of land use - combined with a fully developed awareness of the demands people make upon it. In addition, being aware of the complementary (but often conflicting) interests of different groups and agencies is equally important. Acquiring and developing this knowledge should begin during pre-service training and then be enhanced and refined through work experience and in-service training.

- 4.8 Secondly, staff must know and understand the aims and objectives of the organisation of which they are part - its corporate purpose, policies and values. There should be understanding of its relationship with other organisations; a knowledge of how their organisation functions internally; and its systems, structures and roles that enable things to happen. They should know about the resources the organisation possesses, the people involved and their

skills, the budget, and other assets it uses or owns. It is no less important that volunteers should also have at least a similar working knowledge of their organisation. All this may seem self evident but it is our belief that many staff are woefully ignorant or have totally inadequate information of this kind.

4.9 We arranged a special workshop to assist us in identifying the main areas of 'core knowledge' and we are grateful to the wide cross-section of countryside staff who helped draw up the following list. It is but a short summary of a very wide ranging and detailed discussion.

- Understanding the aims, objectives and policies of one's employer and being aware of and sensitive to the politics of the employing organisation.
- Understanding management and decision-making procedures within the organisation.
- Having an up-to-date knowledge of the environmental, social and economic issues which have an impact on the countryside.
- Understanding the roles of different countryside organisations – government departments, statutory authorities, voluntary bodies and other national organisations with an impact on the countryside, such as the main transport and power industries.
- Knowing about the current agricultural, forestry conservation and land use policies of the government and its agencies.
- Knowing about farming, forestry and other land use patterns; of wildlife, landscape and archaeological and historical features.
- Knowing about natural environmental processes, such as those embracing geology, the climate and ecology.

Figure 6 is our attempt to illustrate the relationship between the three sets of skills, built on a core knowledge of the countryside and of the organisation, and set within a framework of the three strands of management.

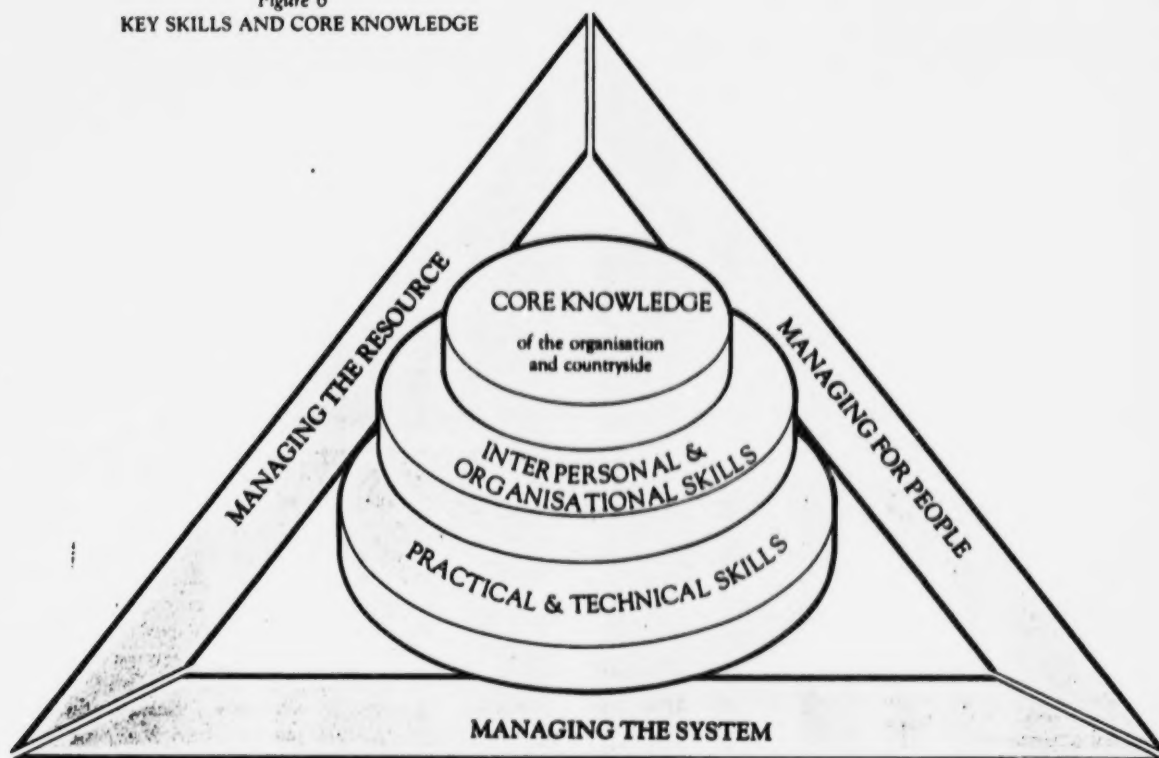
DEVELOPING KEY SKILLS

4.10 The national curriculum and other recent developments in vocational education and training will help to place more emphasis on acquiring transferable skills and securing more widely agreed levels of competence to do a job properly. Further training and skills development, however, must build upon any skills developed during initial education and training and continue outside the formal education system. We consider that both pre-service and in-service training should aim to develop interpersonal and organisational skills to higher levels, and – crucially – help staff to apply them in their work.

4.11 Among countryside staff there is a growing awareness of the need for training in interpersonal skills. The countryside managers of tomorrow want to better their capabilities and improve their appreciation and awareness of other people's expectations and values, and many have recognised that they need to work with people in order to manage the natural environment. More than ever before, staff need to communicate effectively with others to inform, educate, negotiate and liaise. Regrettably we have seen a marked reluctance on the part of employers to acknowledge these needs. We are particularly concerned for those staff who have in the past been regarded as manual workers – particularly wardens and rangers – and whom we believe have not received the support for training in interpersonal and organisational skills that they deserve.

4.12 Needless to say there are both strengths and weaknesses in what is currently available in training for these aspects. Many of the countryside courses in higher and further education fail to provide the kind of training that will help students to develop key skills. Some newer courses are attempting to integrate key skills training with formal teaching and practical work experience, and are consequently more able to provide better pre-service training for

Figure 6
KEY SKILLS AND CORE KNOWLEDGE



specific jobs. More encouraging is the increasing number of short training courses and workshops available to countryside staff for improving their working relationships. We note subjects such as time and team management, negotiating skills, developing personal effectiveness, working with volunteers, working with community groups, and public speaking. Some of the larger employers provide in-house training in these subjects for all staff – regardless of role or responsibility within the organisation – something we hope will become universal. Some enterprising countryside staff have already identified their own need for this kind of training and seek it from organisations outside their immediate working environment.

Many local women's groups now run assertiveness training, which may help with developing negotiating skills for example, and local authority evening classes may cater for those wishing to learn counselling and listening skills, the development of which can considerably enhance interpersonal and staff management skills.

DEVELOPING CORE KNOWLEDGE

4.13 Many countryside staff and volunteers will have received no formal education and training in subjects directly related to countryside management work. Some may have moved sideways from other organisations and careers and can-

not be expected to possess more than a little countryside knowledge. Others may have received formal training in only one aspect of physical resource management and need to develop a wider perspective of the countryside. Similarly, volunteers may have a special interest or expertise in one aspect of the countryside or one specific site but do not understand external issues that affect their efforts.

- 4.14 Training aimed at giving a wider awareness of countryside issues is provided in a variety of ways, with much informal learning experienced 'on the job'. Short courses such as those set out in Figure 7 give a useful introduction to landscape and nature conservation topics.¹ Talks and study visits, accompanied by project work or group discussions and in-house tutoring with experienced staff, are other practical and low-cost methods of providing essential core knowledge. A wealth of easily accessible published material exists, much of it easy to read, full of case studies and giving examples of contemporary countryside problems and solutions.

Figure 7

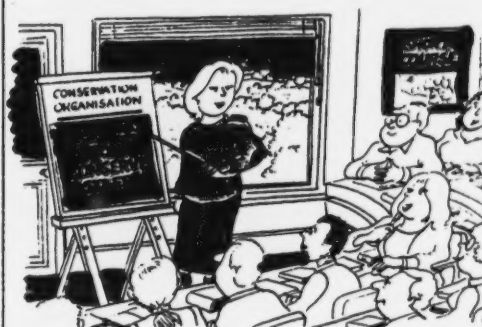
EXTRACT FROM BTCV SHORT
COURSE PROGRAMME

CONSERVATION - FIRST PRINCIPLES
Fri 23 - Sat 24 Feb 1990
Commonwork Centre, Surrey
TUTORS: Colin Beard

An event for those in the organisation without a conservation background. What are the essential principles of conservation? How has it developed in Britain? Here we intend to offer an introduction to the major tenets of conservation and explore the perspectives of participants as to why it is important.

KNOWING MORE ABOUT
THE ORGANISATION

- 4.15 It should be any organisation's responsibility, whether in the private, public or voluntary sector, to ensure its staff and/or volunteers alike understand all about it. This should happen as part of staff induction training at an early stage. A variety of methods can be used - short courses, lectures, group discussions, leaflets, handouts or special induction packs - all have their place. Staff should know where to go to seek further advice and information, and be encouraged to ask questions about the organisation and their role within it. By the same token, any change in an organisation's policy, direction or internal management will necessitate further training so that staff are up to date.



Staff and volunteers must understand their organisation's work.

- 4.16 We know of some good examples of this practice. The National Trust supply all new staff with a video, which details its history, development and aims as well as its current policies and internal administration. The Suffolk Wildlife Trust has developed a series of induction information packs for its volunteers, giving information about the Trust, its work, resources and structure. Additional information to help volunteers is also given about their roles, responsibilities, support and training. Proper induction training for elected officers, honorary committee members and others with

- 4.17 major responsibilities in a voluntary body is particularly important. We understand that whilst much effort is put into recruiting the right people, much less thought is given to their training. Making training available to volunteers is essential but raises a number of questions which we will examine in a later chapter.

BUILDING ON CORE KNOWLEDGE AND KEY SKILLS

Beyond core knowledge and key skills, every job requires different practical and technical skills and related knowledge. Training needs can only be defined individually after analysing the component parts of the job and identifying what is required to carry it out. In our series of workshops we received a good deal of information and detailed advice about the nature of the skills and knowledge required by specific groups of countryside staff. It is not appropriate here either to generalise or produce a definitive list of essential and preferred skills, but such information received through our consultations has been invaluable in helping us to appreciate the wide range of skills and knowledge needed. For example, the workshop comprising representative rangers and wardens identified the following training needs which they felt were not being met:

- negotiating and influencing skills,
- public relations and marketing,
- modern technology in the countryside,
- staff management,
- office skills and information technology,
- training volunteers to do a better job,
- interpretation of the countryside,
- budgeting and finance,
- report writing,
- planning and the countryside,
- health and safety at work legislation.

- 4.18 Whilst it was agreed that in some instances suitable training opportunities were available, there were problems of accessibility. Often, staff could not take advantage of them due to lack of available places, the distances involved or the employer's reluctance to give staff the time and funding to attend. The requests for such skills training indicate how the role of the warden and ranger has widened in recent years, and emphasise that it is vital for training arrangements to keep pace with such changes.

- 4.19 We conclude this chapter with another issue raised at several of our workshops. It is relatively easy for employers and staff alike to identify training needs in practical and organisational skills (though not always to deliver them, as we have observed), but there is a tendency to shy away from philosophical or ethical issues. There is a need to raise awareness, change attitudes and develop the knowledge of staff in relation to issues such as equal opportunities, racial matters and politics in conservation. We agree that the broadening of minds and attitudes on these and other contemporary issues is just as essential for countryside staff as for any others who are having to work with a wider and higher public profile in present-day society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

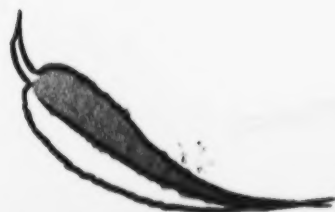
1. **Employers and training providers should:**
 - a. make available, on a continuing basis, training that:
 - balances the three strands of management: of the resource, for people and of the system;
 - ensures that all staff acquire the full range of key skills and core knowledge as well as specialist skills;
 - b. develop opportunities for all staff to participate regularly in high-quality training throughout their careers;
 - c. ensure that staff are fully aware of their employing organisation's role, policies and corporate practices within the context of the changing countryside and society's demands upon it.

2. **Universities, colleges and other training providers should:**
develop courses and training that teach key skills and core knowledge
3. **The Countryside Commission and other organisations** funding or approving training should support only training that follows Recommendations 1 and 2.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

5 TACKLING TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

This chapter considers how to set up the right infrastructure for delivering training in the future. We put forward ideas for developing training programmes and for codes of practice for managers of countryside staff, training providers and those in receipt of training. Coordination is an essential part of the process, including information and advice, training partnerships, links with the grant aiding process and liaison with other national training initiatives. Finally, we suggest a way to encourage better training provision and to sustain momentum.



THE THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP

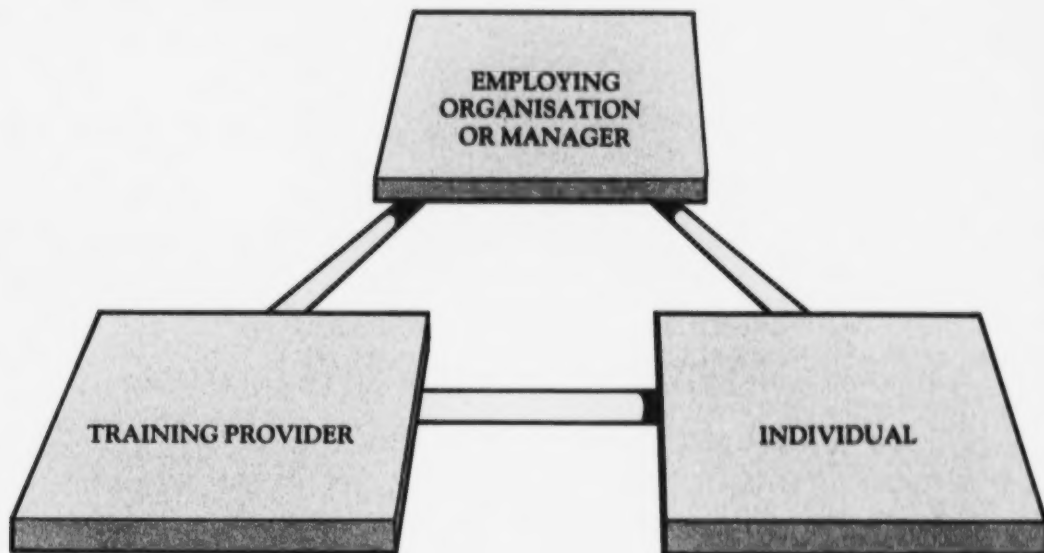
- 5.1 There are positive signs that employers are beginning to give training a higher priority. Good examples of collaborative working between them and training providers are emerging. Nevertheless, the shortcomings in training we have identified are primarily the result of one fundamental problem: the absence of an effective three-way partnership between employers and managers of countryside staff, the trainee (whether an employee or volunteer) and the training provider. More often than not these links are weak or non-existent. The following are typical of the comments we have heard:

- from **employers** "the trainers decide what we want but it doesn't really meet our needs and often we know more than the tutors anyway";

- from **employees** "I can go on a training course if I find it myself and convince my boss it's important";
- from the **training providers** "we try to get employers involved but they don't seem to have time and when they do they don't know or agree on what they want".

All this gives rise to an ad-hoc pattern of training provision and uptake, and striking differences in the relevance, quality and content of training provided both by the employers themselves and by external providers. Only when a three-way partnership is working smoothly can training meet the needs of staff and their employing organisation (Figure 8).

Figure 8
THE THREE-WAY PARTNERSHIP



5.2 The main problems that we have identified, many of which were highlighted in workshop sessions, are on three levels: **first**, locally between the employer, the trainee and the training provider; **second**, at the area level in the sporadic collaboration between employers and trainers; and **third** nationally with lack of coordination of activities, information and expertise. We consider that:

- training is not properly accepted as a management responsibility;
- the role of the employee or trainee in training is frequently unclear;
- much externally provided training is not sufficiently relevant, nor is its content and quality consistently good;
- there are too few sources of information and advice,
- both regional and national coordination is poor.

How can these problems be overcome? We look at each in turn.

HOW CAN MANAGERS DEVELOP TRAINING?

5.3 The most important asset of any organisation is its staff. Managing them effectively and developing their existing and potential skills are crucial. Training and staff development enable organisations and their staff to respond to changing circumstances and make the best use of resources and work techniques. Yet while many managers say training is 'a good thing', in practice it has a low priority. Few managers have sufficient training skills and only rarely do organisations have proper training strategies; furthermore, it appears that on-the-job training is carried out in an ad-hoc fashion and external training opportunities are frequently selected in the same way. In some cases countryside organisations do not have a business plan or corporate strategy, and in such instances developing a training strategy must go hand in hand with better planning for the organisation as a whole.

5.4 If training is to be used to its full effect, managers must be much more positive, drawing if necessary on specialist help. Training is not a one-off activity, it is a cyclical and continuing process (as shown diagrammatically in Figure 9), beginning with an assessment of the training needs of the organisation and of each individual member of staff. Ideally, training programmes should be devised at the organisational level, but as countryside work may be a small part only of the activities of a large organisation, in the short term it may be preferable to concentrate effort at the departmental or team level.

5.5 Appreciating that there is a training cycle is just the first part of the process of improving training; the next stage is to draw up a strategy and implement it. At present this tends to apply to specific groups of staff only, in particular paid or voluntary rangers and those taking part in Employment Training. But some organisations, notably the national parks, the National Trust, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and the Greater Manchester Countryside Unit are adopting the whole approach and we present the Manchester example in Figure 10.

5.6 One problem for many busy managers, is that they themselves have little expertise in training. We believe there are several options open to them:

- to develop training using in-house expertise together with support from external providers,
- to appoint a training co-ordinator or special training officer,
- to employ consultants working to a carefully prepared brief,
- to work with training providers.

Often a combination of these can be used. We offer the following comments on each.

Figure 9
THE TRAINING CYCLE

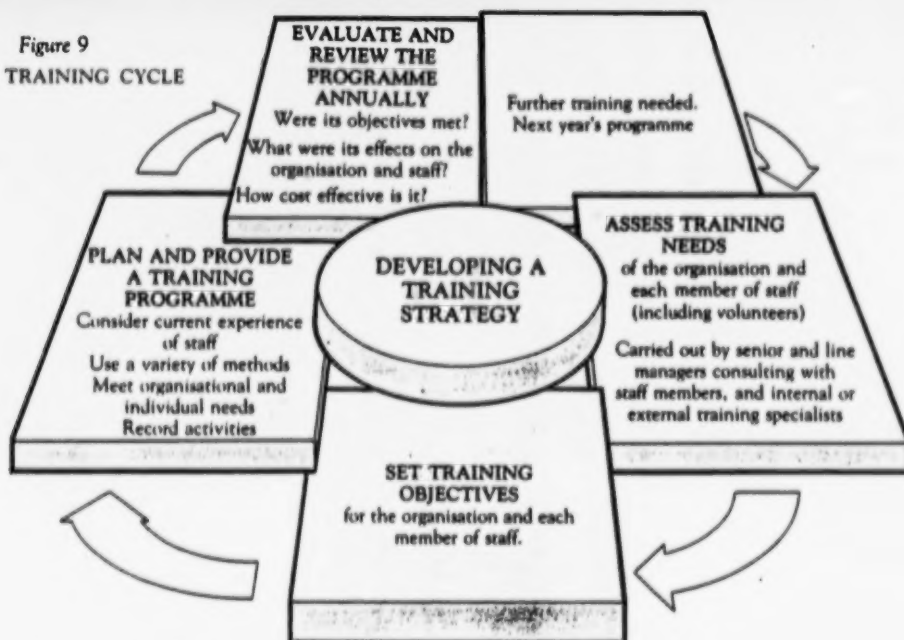


Figure 10
DEVELOPING A TRAINING STRATEGY -
THE EXAMPLE OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER
COUNTRYSIDE UNIT

Background

The Greater Manchester Countryside Unit (GMCU) was established, following the abolition of the Greater Manchester Council, by the 10 District Councils with Countryside Commission support. It aims to provide an advisory service on a wide range of countryside issues and employs 17 staff, including countryside planners, ecologists, a forester, a landscape manager, a graphic designer and technical and clerical support. From the outset the GMCU has supported staff training, mainly through external courses and those provided by the host authority, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council. But it was felt that a more structured approach was needed and the following procedure was set in train.

Stage 1 - Assessing training needs

This was done by listing:

- all the current work activities that incorporate an element of staff development,
- the Unit's corporate priorities for development and future training,
- likely resources and training opportunities to meet these needs.

These were discussed with all staff, trades unions and the Personnel Department.

Stage 2 - Setting training objectives

An outline training strategy setting objectives and priorities was drafted and discussed with staff, trades unions and the Personnel Department. Individuals were encouraged to consider their personal training needs.

Stages 3 and 4 - Planning, providing and evaluating the programme

These are now being implemented.

Initial results

The staff team are more aware of the common training needs of the Unit and of their own aspirations. They are more alert to the full range of opportunities for on-the-job training - such as using library facilities, writing articles, giving media interviews, chairing Unit and other meetings and presenting conference sessions. Simply by taking this systematic approach the Unit is using its resources more effectively.

USING EXISTING IN-HOUSE EXPERTISE

5.7 In-house expertise is most commonly available to larger organisations, such as local authorities, who may have training sections offering courses in common skills for all departments and who use external training providers contracted in. In-house trainers can advise on developing training, provide basic induction programmes, supply management and communications training, advise on external sources and carry out administration. Training officers who are not countryside specialists will need help from managers to identify the specialist needs of their countryside staff and to suggest sources for such training. We hope our report will help in this respect. In multi-disciplinary teams, if learning is structured properly, countryside staff can learn effectively from each other, exchanging skills through

on-the-job training, internal courses and site visits. These can be very cost-effective methods but only if staff have good communication and training skills. Much more use should be made of the other methods of in-house training listed in Appendix 1, and proper appraisal, evaluation and feedback systems must also be set up. Convening an internal working party can be a low-cost way to draw expertise together and helps to focus attention on training. The Association of National Park Officers (ANPO) Training Working Party outlined in Figure 32 Appendix 2, is a good example.

APPOINTING TRAINING COORDINATORS OR OFFICERS

- 5.8 Another effective way to assist managers in providing good training is to appoint an experienced countryside training coordinator. This person can act as an internal consultant, help assess needs, advise on the most appropriate training methods, find information and training, and facilitate new developments. Several national bodies follow this approach, including the Groundwork Foundation, Royal Society for Nature Conservation (RSNC), and the BTCV. However, we consider that this system works only if managers are committed to using training, appreciate its role as an aid to development and change, and – importantly – creatively use the whole range of training methods. It is not an effective use of time for a training officer simply to run or administer training courses. For those organisations where resources are limited or which are too small to support a full-time coordinator, training development can be successfully made part of the work of an existing staff member, but again sufficient time must be set aside and suitable training given in support.

USING OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS

- 5.9 Consultants can help to make an independent assessment and case for training – and assist in justifying the budget needed. By analysing needs, piloting and evaluating training events, and developing programmes to equip staff with the skills to promote and deliver training, they

Figure 11
CONSULTANCY ASSESSMENT OF FWAG
OFFICERS' TRAINING NEEDS

Background

A FWAG officer is responsible for one or more counties and although assisted by different organisations, each faces particular difficulties of isolation. New officers must set up an administration system, a local network of contacts and be able to work quickly and effectively to meet their set target of annual visits. They carry out a wide range of advisory, publicity, administrative, survey and research tasks.

Methods

The assessment included the following stages.

- A questionnaire to all FWAG officers seeking their assessment of training needs and comments about training in general. The findings were collated by members of FWAG's Education and Training Steering Group.
- A two-day intensive workshop involving FWAG officers and staff from ATB, NCC and the Countryside Commission to analyse priority work areas, identify the skills and knowledge required and develop a proposed structured training programme.
- The consultancy prepared a Training Needs Assessment report which recommended:

induction training,
coaching by neighbouring FWAG advisers and senior advisers,
a staff information pack,
study visits,
the preparation of checklists (eg for farm visit procedures),
guidelines and technical notes for advisers,
at least 10 days external training per year, including courses but excluding induction time, was given as a guideline.

can bring fresh views and ideas. Although many commercial management consultancies advise on training, only a few have experience of the countryside field. The Training Agency has provided small grants to help organisations assess their training needs (a 'training audit') prior to developing Employment Training Programmes, and now offer grants to businesses to cover half of the costs of commissioning training consultants. There are some interest-

ing examples of countryside organisations using the consultancy method. The National Trust commissioned the Industrial Society to advise on developing its training policy and programmes; Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) retain a part-time consultant; BTCV's central training unit carried out a training audit for Conservation Practice Limited (a BTCV company), and a local authority rights of way officer was seconded to act as a consultant to the Countryside Commission to identify the training needs of rights of way staff. Figure 11 summarises the methods used by the Agricultural Training Board (ATB) in preparing a training strategy for the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG).

WORKING WITH TRAINING PROVIDERS

- 5.10 At present many employers feel that external training is too strongly determined by the training providers. Closer links between employers and training providers would help to avoid this, make better use of their respective expertise, and ensure the right type of pre-service and in-service training is developed. Examples include employers participating in course steering groups and training advisory panels, teaching on courses, hosting field projects, giving feedback to the providers about the usefulness of training, and providing work placements. In the short term, employers can benefit directly – for example from student placements and research through project work. Post-graduate courses such as those at Manchester Polytechnic and University College London regularly carry out valuable studies for 'client' employers. The longer term benefits include job applicants with the initial skills that meet employers' needs, and a better range of in-service training.

A CODE OF GOOD TRAINING PRACTICE FOR EMPLOYERS AND MANAGERS OF COUNTRYSIDE STAFF

- 5.11 In our view, to secure real improvement, employers and managers of countryside staff must prepare and implement a training strategy. Inevitably time and money are required

Figure 12
CODE OF GOOD TRAINING PRACTICE FOR
EMPLOYERS AND MANAGERS

- **Develop a training strategy**
Appraise individual and organisational current and future training needs, set objectives, define priorities, plan and deliver training, review and evaluate annually.
- **Allocate staff time and money**
Make the preparation of a written training strategy the responsibility of a senior manager. Aim at 5 per cent of salary budget for training. Provide at least 15 days training per year, including 10 from external sources using a variety of methods. Provide staff time for training, including that of volunteers and senior managers.
- **Use a blend of training sources and methods**
Identify a range of sources and types of training and use according to individual staff needs and resources available.
- **Balance the content**
Blend practical, technical and managerial training including key skills, core knowledge and specialist technical skills.
- **Remember the three-way partnership**
Managers, staff and trainers all have training roles. Good training needs good working contacts. Make sure staff have the opportunity to apply what they have learnt.

but we believe much can be done by using existing resources more effectively. The Countryside Commission recommends at least ten days of external training per year, (using a variety of methods), for all their sponsored countryside staff, which taken together with internal training amounts to a minimum of fifteen days. Realistic training budgets must be allocated and spent. Commercial firms with good training practices allocate around 4 per cent of their salary budget¹, and the average training expenditure within the Civil Service in 1986/87² was around 6 per cent. Countryside employers should consider allocating an intermediate figure of 5 per cent of their salary budget to training, in order to cover the costs, which

include, developing training, course fees, travel expenses and specialist expertise. The training strategy should reflect use of the full range of training opportunities and content, and include attention to the key skills and core knowledge we outlined earlier.

In Figure 12 we suggest a five-point code of good training practice for employers and managers of countryside staff.

A CODE OF GOOD TRAINING PRACTICE FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

5.12 We know that it is all too often left to staff themselves to pursue suitable training opportunities and then seek managerial support. If the code of good training practice for managers is adopted, training practices will improve. They will, however, only be fully successful if staff and volunteers feel involved and are actively supportive. Undertaking training is not a passive activity — it needs concentration and a commitment of time, sometimes away from home or after usual working hours. Trainees should provide feedback following training, apply what is learned, and record the effects. Work time needs to be set aside to do this.

5.13 Being able to identify training needs is a strength and not a weakness. It is impossible for those in a multi-disciplinary field to be skilled in every aspect. It is far more important to be aware of limitations and know when and where to seek advice. This applies just as much to top managers as to junior staff and volunteers. Everyone should participate in assessing training needs and developing training proposals and be open to a variety of training methods. Being prepared and able to train others is an important further role. Learning from colleagues can be as valuable as externally provided training, and staff and volunteers should be prepared to contribute to in-house training. We appreciate too, that professional institutes and associations have a role in giving training a higher profile, as do the trades unions. They can help by promoting the value of training and encouraging staff to become more actively involved in its planning and delivery. The benefits are in better job satisfaction, develop-

ing new skills, gaining qualifications and aiding career progression. We devote the next chapter to their contribution. In Figure 13 we suggest a five-point code of good training practice for staff and volunteers.

Figure 13 CODE OF GOOD TRAINING PRACTICE FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- **Acknowledge that training demands active commitment**
Time, concentration, feedback and implementation are all necessary
- **Recognise that identifying training needs is a strength and not a weakness**
Know where limitations lie or where to seek advice
- **Be open to a variety of training methods**
Courses are not always the most effective form of training
On-the-job training, open learning, study visits, work exchanges and other methods all have their place
- **Understand the good practice code for employers and managers**
Know the training cycle and the three-way partnership
- **Be prepared to train others**
Learn the basic skills of training others

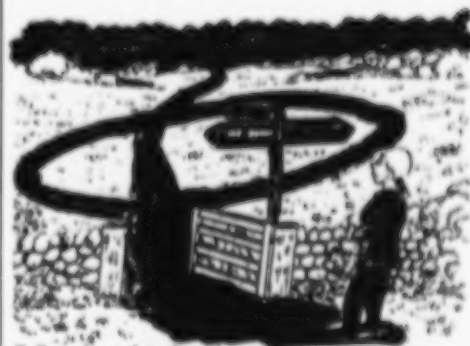
A CODE OF TRAINING PRACTICE FOR TRAINING PROVIDERS

5.14 It is in the interests of external providers, who often face competition and pressure to run cost-effective training, to develop closer links with employers. Some providers already consult regularly but we feel there is much room for improvement and we suggest that the providers too should follow a code of training practice as detailed in Figure 14. First, providers must adopt a consistent philosophy: that conservation is important; and that people are a resource for conservation, rather than a nuisance in the countryside. Second, training must aim to develop the key skills and core knowledge needed to carry out the job. Training in specialist subjects should be set within this context, so that specialists know which

other areas they might need to develop. Third, an holistic approach should be taken. Countryside management is a multi-disciplinary subject involving many specialist topics, so integration of all the aspects taught is essential. Fourth, employers and staff have a right to expect high quality training. They want tutors to be knowledgeable about their subject and to be able to put it across. There is evidence from participants in full and part-time education and short courses that the trainers' skills are often lacking in one or both of these areas. Continuing training and staff development must become standard practice for training providers as well as for countryside employers and their staff. Finally, training providers should support the three-way training partnership. This way they can evaluate the effects of their training, help employers to assess training needs and improve training provision. Despite the climate of competition within education and training, joint working between organisations with complementary skills will have real benefits.

Figure 14
CODE OF GOOD TRAINING PRACTICE FOR
TRAINING PROVIDERS

- **Adopt a consistent philosophy**
Conservation is important
People are a resource for conservation
Practice equal opportunities, do not discriminate on the grounds of sex, age, origin or beliefs
- **Balance the training content to include key skills and core knowledge and the three strands of management**
Management of the resource, for people and of the system go hand in hand
- **Take a multi-disciplinary approach**
Integrate different subject areas fully
Make the context of training clear
- **Ensure training staff have credibility and communication skills**
Up-to-date experience of their subject is important
Implement a staff development policy
- **Remember the three-way partnership**
Active links are needed with employers and trainees
Seek feedback and adopt training accordingly.



Follow the codes of good training practice.

IMPROVING INFORMATION AND ADVICE

5.15 Widespread adoption of the three codes of practice should improve the quality and content of training but they will increase the need for information and sound advice. Effective sources of both are crucial for employers seeking suitable training and for training providers to avoid duplication of effort. In Chapter 3 we have already noted the shortcomings of existing directories and databases and highlighted the need for more comprehensive sources of information. There is plenty of published material on the many aspects of training and education as a whole. Training material for countryside trainers, such as videos, training packs and training exercises is in short supply and only a few consultants have experience in advising on countryside training. Further sources of help are needed.

5.16 Improvements can be made in three ways. First, the provision of simple guidelines for use by countryside employers, staff and training providers, so that they will be able to help themselves more. Such guidelines should include examples of good practice, how to develop and implement a training strategy and it should explain their roles and responsibilities. Training materials need to be developed to support training in key skills and core knowledge and new policy developments. Second, a National Countryside Training Information Service is needed, combining a comprehensive computer database of country-

side training opportunities with a service to answer enquiries. Third, **the amount of training expertise should be increased.** We look at the training of specialists, occasional trainers and managers in more detail in Chapter 7 and we consider that more specialist training staff need to be appointed. Existing countryside advisory staff should be trained to give training information and advice. Advisory staff, such as those within the Countryside Commission, NCC and other countryside agencies, have a key role both in influencing training practices and providing advice.

DEVELOPING EVALUATION METHODS

- 5.17 In common with other sectors, countryside management is increasingly expected to measure and demonstrate its achievements. Similarly, those who fund training are also looking for demonstrable targets and outputs, sometimes called 'performance indicators'. Without proper monitoring and evaluation, organisations may be hampered in bidding for training support funds. Most evaluation of in-service training, has been developed for the business and commercial sector, where increased production or improved sales can be used as performance indicators. Within the countryside sector, little work has been completed except that undertaken by short course providers assessing customer satisfaction and comments after training events. The Countryside Commission has commissioned research³ to look at evaluation methods and the longer term effects of training courses. Initial findings show that evaluation in itself stimulates employers and staff to give more thought to the benefits of training. These include new ideas, contacts, improved motivation and greater confidence. The Training Agency ensure that YTS and ET projects are monitored by means of training diaries, supervisor assessments and a programme review involving all parties. The Business and Technical Education Council (BTEC) have a system for reviewing and monitoring courses which involves academics and employers. Employers on the other hand, if they evaluate at all, use more subjective informal

assessments of improved performance, but rarely keep records, particularly of on-the-job training. We believe that all training should be evaluated but more work is needed to develop simple methods for use in the countryside sector and to give examples of good practice.

IMPROVING NATIONAL COORDINATION

- 5.18 Earlier in our report we recognised that a comprehensive national over-view of countryside staff training needs has not been undertaken before. Reviews of some sectors have influenced provision – for example, the decision to close some planning degree courses leading to the closure of two degrees with a rural planning specialism; and reviews have also been carried out within the agricultural, amenity horticultural, and museums and libraries⁴ sectors. The Yates Committee in 1984⁵ considered countryside management within their review of recreation management training. Although usefully concentrating upon the need for managerial skills, this committee did not attempt to address the full range of skills and knowledge needed by countryside staff. With so many different qualification levels, validating, examining and funding bodies within education, and with universities, and many other higher education establishments able to validate their own courses, there is no national forum for coordinating countryside training provision. Increasing competition between institutions tends to favour excess provision in currently popular subjects and under provision in others. It takes forward looking providers, good at market research and closely linked with employers, to recognise areas of future need. We urge all those concerned to take a more coordinated and co-operative approach.

NATIONAL STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- 5.19 A national system of coordinating standards and qualifications is in place through the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ). This council has stimulated 'industry

lead bodies' to be set up covering every employment sector. Within the environmental sector this includes lead bodies in agriculture, forestry, amenity horticulture and the Council for Occupational Standards and Qualifications in Environmental Conservation (COSQUEC). Each will set standards of competence and performance criteria required for employment in that sector, and look at the extent to which existing training opportunities and qualifications meet them; decide what changes in content and modes of assessment are needed, and whether new modules should be established. The standards set will help to guide in-house training development as well as external provision and are likely to stimulate an increased demand for training. However, with countryside staff playing such a wide variety of multi-disciplinary roles, COSQUEC cannot easily embrace the whole range of their interests or fully coordinate provision. The experience of longer established lead bodies suggests that it is likely to take at least three years for COSQUEC to complete its work. In the meantime we fear there is considerable room for confusion, speculative training developments and a possible increase of ad hoc provision, particularly as training gains a higher national profile. Some means is needed of overseeing the whole range of countryside staff training interests during this interim period.

- 9.20 The *Employment for the 1990s* White Paper proposes that a new National Training Task Force is set up to advise the Secretary of State for Employment. It aims to help the development of a proposed 100 local Training Enterprise Councils (TECs), two-thirds of whose members will be business employers at top management level. This leaves only a small number of places for those voluntary and public organisations who employ the majority of countryside staff but who, for reasons of transport and geography, have less access to training. The rural dimension is given no particular emphasis within the White Paper and we consider it is important that discussions take place at national level with the National

Training Task Force and that a mechanism for local representation on TECs is developed.

- 9.21 Concern has been expressed generally, and through our workshops, about the provision and coordination of training at the local or regional level. It is felt that more external opportunities that are locally available to employers are needed, particularly part-time ones and short courses leading to qualifications. A number of approaches have been tried – including training providers convening meetings with employers, and organisations working together within a region to try to support a training coordinator. A satisfactory method has yet to be found. It is likely that methods would need to vary from one area to another and we feel that further discussion is needed about whether, and how, this should take place.

- 9.22 In spite of the encouraging developments in the training scene now taking place, we consider that the particular needs of countryside staff will not be properly satisfied or fully taken into account. We believe there is an impetus behind the aim of providing better training for countryside staff which this report can assist. But it is beyond our remit to take things further: we suggest therefore that a Countryside Training Forum should be set up to carry out this extended role. What we have in mind is to focus attention and effort on countryside training in England and Wales by, for example:

- monitoring progress following the publication of our report;
- stimulating activity to raise the profile of training;
- providing a continuing link at national level between employers, government agencies, training providers, validation, funding and examining bodies;
- helping to determine the most effective level of training provision;
- assessing whether additional coordination or networking is needed, for example at regional level;

- considering whether accreditation of countryside trainers is needed;
- continuing to monitor likely future training needs, research findings and new developments.

5.23 Our view is that such a forum should be organised jointly by the Countryside Commission and NCC, to cover the whole field of conservation and recreation management with members representing employers, providers and countryside staff and contributing professional expertise. In Figure 15 we put forward a suggested composition for the forum, which we envisage meeting twice a year. For an effective working group it should have around a dozen members. We feel it is important that the forum should complement the work of COS-QUEC and after three years its role would be reviewed.

Figure 15
PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF COUNTRYSIDE
STAFF TRAINING FORUM

Chair:
Independent or NCC/Countryside Commission

Secretariat and support staff:
Independent, supported by NCC/Countryside Commission/Training Agency funding

Members:
Voluntary organisations
(eg British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, National Trust, Association of Countryside Rangers)
Governmental agencies
(eg Countryside Commission, Nature Conservancy Council, English Heritage, Training Agency)
Local authority employers
(eg Association of County Councils, Association of District Councils, Association of Metropolitan Authorities)
Private employer
(eg a private sector manager)
Education and training providers experienced in countryside training provision
(eg from universities/colleges, training boards)

5.24 To improve radically the provision of better training for countryside staff requires action on

the part of everyone involved in the process. In this chapter we have put forward a package of proposals by which we believe better training can be delivered. They lead us to make the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Employers should:

- adopt and implement the code of good training practice for employers and managers;
- prepare staff training strategies and programmes for their organisations;
- increase their staff expertise in training methods;
- establish a training budget equivalent to 5 per cent of staff salary costs.

5. Countryside staff and volunteers should:

- use the code of good training practice for countryside staff and volunteers;
- work with their employers to identify their individual training needs;
- be open to a range of training approaches to meet these needs.

6. Training providers should:

- adopt and implement the code of good training practice for training providers;
- work closely with trainees and employers to ensure training meets their real needs.

7. The statutory countryside agencies should:

- evaluate the effectiveness of different training methods;
- coordinate their activities to increase the supply and availability of information, advice and guidance on training.

8. The Countryside Commission should:

- promote the adoption of the codes of good training practice;
- support the development and regular updating of a National Countryside Training Information Service;
- establish, jointly with the Nature Conservancy Council, a Countryside Training Forum.

6 THE COUNTRYSIDE AND THE PROFESSIONAL

Professional institutes, associations and societies represent the interests of many employed in various occupations related to the countryside. They perform a variety of valuable roles of which education and training is one of the most important.

In this chapter we examine the contribution they make and suggest how this might be increased to meet the changing needs of those employed in countryside management and how they might fulfil an even wider role in countryside staff training.

6



PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES AND STAFF ASSOCIATIONS

6.1 As we have stressed elsewhere in our report, countryside work is fundamentally multidisciplinary in nature. It involves a diversity of staff with a variety of backgrounds and experience. Consequently it is not surprising that there are no recognised qualifications or professional bodies concerned uniquely or specifically with the broad span of countryside conservation and recreation management work. Many staff hold no professional qualification, while others are members of such professional bodies as the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Institute of Leisure and Amenity Managers (ILAM) and the Landscape Institute (LI). Many people, both with and without professional qualifications, also belong to special interest associations or societies.

6.2 It is important to differentiate between institutes and associations. Full membership of the former is obtained through a formal system of examinations and work experience, and entry is generally open only to individuals holding graduate level qualifications. Membership of associations depends less on formal qualifications and is usually obtained through working in a specific job, or having special interest in a particular subject or area of work. We examine the role of associations in providing support and training for their members later.

PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES

6.3 Professional institutes important to countryside staff and other land managers are shown in Figure 16. Clearly the boundaries and areas of interest of a number of professional institutes and other bodies overlap. Inevitably, this complex and rather fragmented professional structure has created certain problems:

- it makes an integrated approach towards countryside conservation difficult;
- the countryside component in the professional training of many countryside staff is often a minor or peripheral element;

- individuals frequently find problems in pursuing their career development if their changing career paths cross over established professional boundaries;
- people without degree level qualifications can experience acute problems of career progression and mobility at middle and senior management levels.

6.4 We feel that these difficulties mitigate against the provision of better training for countryside staff and they should be alleviated if at all possible. But first we consider the role and contribution of professional bodies to the work of countryside staff.

For countryside staff, membership of a professional institute is desirable for four reasons:

- it allows an entry path to specific professional jobs;
- it can facilitate promotion once in post;
- it can provide access to training and other opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD);
- it provides a focus for wider interest and involvement in professional issues.

6.5 "A professional qualification in a land-based discipline" is a frequently stated requirement in job advertisements. This requirement appears to be more important in local government at middle and senior managerial levels, although the precise qualification needed may depend upon the departmental 'location' of the countryside section. Countryside staff are usually attached to planning departments, but may also be located within leisure and libraries, parks and recreation, or property and estates. Staff dealing with rights of way can be found within highways departments, planning departments, public works or technical services. Some employers attach particular importance to having professionally qualified staff and may encourage their efforts towards attaining full membership of an institute. We welcome such support, which to some extent helps to compensate for the difficulty many experience in finding funds

Figure 16

PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES OF RELEVANCE TO COUNTRYSIDE STAFF

Name	Total Membership (approx figures)	Estimated membership of those categories relevant to countryside staff	Membership qualifications
Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)	14,000	No available figures (but many qualified planners involved in countryside work)	Examinations by Institute or First or Post-graduate degree to give exemption. Work experience for full membership
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)	59,000	4,000 in Land Agency and Agricultural division	Full-time or part-time degree or diploma. Work experience and test of professional competence
Institute of Leisure and Amenity Managers (ILAM)	4,500	No available figures	Examinations and three years work experience for diploma
The Landscape Institute (LI)	2,700	101 Landscape Managers and 55 Landscape Scientists	Application considered by admissions panel
Institute of Biology (IOB)	5,500	3,000 in Environment Division	Degree or diploma in biological subjects or Institutes own examinations plus relevant work experience
Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF)	1,230	No available figures	Degree in forestry or equivalent for Associate Membership. Part I & II exams for full membership

for post-graduate study. However, small training budgets may be rapidly consumed, (by course fees, for example), and the training received may be of direct advantage only to the individual. Consequently, the funds available for the training of others within the department to a higher professional standard may be very restricted.

- 6.6 We have found that employers' preferences for staff holding professional qualifications can cause discontent and consternation. This is particularly apparent amongst those staff with no formal professional qualifications but who are nevertheless well qualified or experienced. Each of the professional bodies indicated in

Figure 16 have strict academic entry requirements to degree standard for full membership. Once the choice of a first degree or post-graduate course is made, opportunities to study for a professional qualification in another field later in life will be limited. Consequently graduates in geography, the environmental sciences, biology, and other environment-related disciplines seeking wider employment often feel their lack of 'relevant' professional status hinders their career prospects. By the same token, others with perhaps a wealth of experience in another sector of industry, or a fully developed but nevertheless 'amateur' knowledge of wildlife, landscape or heritage may feel equally devalued. In the absence of a

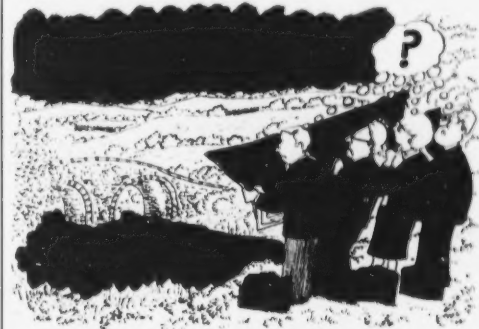
professional institute giving recognition to countryside management work as a profession in its own right, staff who wish to become a member of a professional body have one of two options: either to persuade existing institutes to broaden their membership requirements to allow them entry; or collectively, to form an entirely new institute better suited to their roles and qualifications.

CHANGING ATTITUDES AND BROADENING PERSPECTIVES

- 6.7 We believe the first of these should be looked at immediately, by both prospective members and the institutes. Staff themselves should be clear about the wider context of their work and identify which of the existing institutes have the potential to represent their interests best. At the same time it is essential that the institutes show more concern for countryside management and broaden their perspectives. They would stand to gain far more by expanding their membership in this field than protecting narrow professional territories. We consider that higher priority needs to be given both to countryside issues within the broad scope of institutional activities, and to the promotion of better pre-service training and professional development in the range of countryside management occupations.
- 6.8 We understand that the RTPI, LI, ILAM and RICS have already moved some way in this direction. The RTPI have re-convened their Countryside Panel to develop the Institute's policy on countryside planning issues; the RICS intend to replace their Agriculture and Land Agency division with a new Rural Practice Division in July 1989. This follows a major review and working party recommendations on countryside management in 1986. The Landscape Institute intends to move towards a wider perspective on landscape management, with a view to having eventually a single membership category — superseding its present division into landscape designers, managers and scientists. ILAM are anxious to extend membership to all types of leisure managers, including those working in countryside recreation management in both the public and private sector.

PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING — PROVIDING A COUNTRYSIDE PERSPECTIVE

- 6.9 Despite the era of change in the countryside now with us, and the increasingly high profile of countryside management issues, formal education and training have not kept pace. Training at Higher National Diploma, degree or post-graduate level for careers in the established professions of landscape architecture, town and country planning, land agency or recreation management is available through a number of colleges, polytechnics and universities. But despite the undoubted high vocational and academic standards of most of these courses, and the value of any work experience acquired prior to qualification, they often lack any real depth of interest in countryside issues. Core knowledge about the countryside and conveying an ability to see the countryside as a whole, in a multi-purpose perspective, is neglected.



Professional institutes need a wider countryside perspective.

- 6.10 First degree and post-graduate courses that give exemption from RTPI professional examinations are taught at 30 planning schools in the British Isles. The countryside management component of these courses varies a great deal. For example the courses and syllabuses often interchange the words 'rural' and 'countryside' so a course on rural planning can easily omit countryside conservation, recreation and access topics and concentrate largely on socio-

- economic issues and policies. Formal recognition of rural planning (along with urban, regional and local planning) by the RTPI in the early 1970s, has not generally improved the treatment of countryside issues within the system of planning education and, except on a few courses, there is no proper consideration of, and training in, countryside planning and management.
- 6.11 Our view is that training for chartered surveyors is biased. Economic land management is obviously the highest priority, but formal training pays insufficient attention to the conservation and recreation aspects of land management. Clearly the range of topics studied and examined will reflect the nature of the college or university providing the course, and the interests and specialisms of its teaching staff. However, there is still considerable scope to incorporate much more on the wider applications of countryside management, even at the expense of time spent on the more traditional subjects. For this reason we welcome recent proposals to incorporate conservation and recreation issues into a new course aiming to give students working towards RICS membership a broader countryside perspective. All tend to be too narrowly based within their particular field and would benefit from a greater appreciation of how their role should fit the wider countryside perspective – and the future demands on that countryside for it to serve a wider spectrum of interests without conflict.
- 6.12 The formal education and training that leads to ILAM qualifications at both certificate and diploma level is perhaps more flexible and less constrained by long-held attitudes and values. The route to such qualifications combines academic learning with work experience and is open to individuals from a variety of backgrounds. However, the countryside recreation module of the ILAM certificate, although carefully researched and developed in consultation with countryside organisations, is only an optional component of the qualification. The emphasis of training for the profession is on the management of leisure facilities and the people who run them.
- 6.13 An analysis of the established courses in landscape architecture, in relation to countryside conservation needs, reveals both strengths and weaknesses. As with other qualifications which have attained formal institute recognition, standards and contents are clearly defined and governed. Landscape architects possess an understanding of design principles, have a sensitivity and awareness of the impact of their actions on the landscape, and learn co-ordinating and management skills through contract management. There is, however, a lack of emphasis on rural situations, large-scale working and a limited knowledge of agricultural practices. The newer courses in landscape management seek to address some of these shortcomings. Their emphasis on long-term care of the landscape, and planning and management for future use assumes a broader perspective and moves closer towards providing a firm base for 'countryside professional' training.
- 6.14 Finally, it is not yet clear to us how the professional institutes' qualifications will fit into the developing NCVQ framework. Professional institutes already have their own clearly defined standards and tests of competence at above NCVQ Level 5. Although membership of all institutes – apart from ILAM – is becoming increasingly restricted to graduates, it is our strongly held view that a combination of both academic qualifications and work experience should be an essential component for membership of any professional institute connected with the countryside.
- CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS**
- 6.15 Continuing professional development (CPD) embraces the simple notion of maintaining a regular commitment to training throughout a career. It is a means by which skills can be updated and new knowledge acquired to enhance professional expertise. It can be met in a variety of ways:
- special training courses provided in-house or by other organisations;

- conferences, seminars and technical meetings;
- staff exchanges, secondments and internal transfers;
- home-based learning and self-study;
- working parties, preparing technical information or responses to consultations;
- technical authorship, research and lectureships.

CPD has been adopted by three of the professional institutes mentioned earlier, with policies and mechanisms incorporated into their codes of professional conduct. Figure 17 is an example of the CPD programme adopted by the RTPI.

Figure 17
CPD AND THE ROYAL TOWN PLANNING INSTITUTE

The RTPI offers guidance to individuals through written material, a CPD record sheet and via contact with a national CPD coordinator or regional coordinators. Two information leaflets are available, one for individual members and one for local authority managers and employers. The CPD scheme is self-assessed and self-regulated and a minimum of 50 hours involvement over two years is recommended. It is up to the individual to analyse her or his training needs following a structured method, and the RTPI provide guidance on the analysis of an individual's job to identify functions performed, the skills and knowledge required to carry out those functions and assess the priority for CPD to develop current and future work.

- 6.16 We whole-heartedly endorse this approach and regard it as an essential pre-requisite to developing good training practice. A well thought out and promoted CPD scheme is important in a number of ways:

- it helps to clarify training needs more precisely;
- it provides an opportunity to raise awareness of training needs and opportunities with an employer;

- it provides evidence and practical means for maintaining standards of professional competence;
- it enables training providers to respond to the needs identified by staff and employers.

However, the opportunities for taking up CPD vary considerably for members within any professional institute. Most institutes hold conferences and seminars, often jointly with others, and some have special self-learning packs for members. But there appears to be no consistency in the approach to CPD or the resources made available in its support.

A COUNTRYSIDE INSTITUTE?

- 6.17 The formation of a new countryside institute has been put forward by some, and recently the idea has been given more substance by the British Association of Nature Conservationists (BANC), who are considering whether to establish an Institute of Natural Resource Managers to represent the interests of ecologists and others involved in nature conservation. In our view there are both advantages and disadvantages in establishing a new body. An institute would undoubtedly help to raise the status of countryside staff. It could speak authoritatively on behalf of its members and enhance career prospects, and it would help to ensure a countryside conservation contribution to the national environmental debate, policy development, planning enquiries and other issues of concern. Additionally, an institute could provide a better focus for training and post-qualification development of its members.

- 6.18 Nevertheless it must be said that countryside staff are relatively few in number, compared with the other major countryside professions. Many potential members of a new 'countryside institute' would hold professional qualifications and membership of existing bodies. Such institutes may view the proposed new body as 'competition'. To develop fully as a professional institute with a recognised standing and status, requires support and acceptance by other bodies with an interest in its work. It will also need

substantial resources for its administration, staff and operations, and in our view it is unlikely that the relatively small numbers of countryside management staff would provide a viable membership base to sustain such a structure. But, more importantly, we believe that it is essential to extend the interest, commitment and contribution made by all other professional institutions. Countryside protection and management should be part and parcel of their work. Setting up a separate body would tend to fragment even more something that should be the stock in trade of everybody with an interest in the countryside.

STAFF ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIETIES – PROVIDERS OF SUPPORT AND TRAINING

6.19 In addition to the professional institutes there are a number of informal staff associations and societies. Their members are drawn from those who have similar jobs or interests and form a forum for support, discussion and information exchange. Figure 18 indicates some of those currently in existence, together with an estimate of their membership. Some have been formed in response to a feeling that established professional bodies have little to offer to special interest groups. Others are long established and have a large membership. Most are run entirely by voluntary officers and thus reflect the abilities and commitment of members and honorary officers. They are very susceptible to change because jobs and remits alter and key individuals move into other occupations or take on additional work or responsibilities.

6.20 The degree of support given by the various associations to their members varies considerably according to their size and strength of organisation. It ranges from occasional meetings and annual conferences to newsletters, journals, study tours, financial support and insurance cover. Their attitudes to training and their ability to provide a service for members vary considerably. Some, although unable to organise their own training, are able to contribute to members' expenses incurred through their participation in relevant conferences and study tours organised by others. Recently,

countryside associations have developed a greater awareness of the importance of good training, which is reflected in the way several associations now identify members' training needs and provide opportunities to fulfill them. The Association of Countryside Rangers, for example organises a regional programme of short courses for wardens and rangers. The County Surveyors Society also has a training group organising events and they are currently researching training needs and provision for rights of way staff. Similarly, the Association of National Park Officers has a training working party to review staff training in national parks. Figure 19 is an example of how an association run entirely by volunteers began to develop a training programme for its members.

6.21 An association's or society's ability to provide some form of structured training for its members depends upon:

- understanding of the role of training in helping personal and professional development amongst key individuals;
- promoting the training message to achieve peer group support;
- obtaining adequate funding to support a training programme;
- identifying training needs and finding suitable training providers to organise training on their behalf.

Proper development of training is demanding and time consuming. It may not happen at all if an association has no one charged with that responsibility. We note too, that several associations have organised their own training in response to their members' frustration with the failure of employers to provide any. We believe it is vital for employers and staff – including volunteers – to work in partnership to provide proper training: it should not be the responsibility of just one of the parties.

6.22 We are convinced that professional institutes and associations can make an even greater contribution in future to the education and training of countryside staff.

Figure 18
EXAMPLES OF COUNTRYSIDE STAFF ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIETIES

Organisation	Total Membership	Membership Criteria
Association of County Archaeologists	33	Must be employed as County Council Archaeologists
Association of Conservation Officers	550	Local authority planners, landscape architects, architects concerned with building conservation
Association of Countryside Rangers	971	Full-time rangers/wardens who practice conservation
Association of National Parks and Countryside Voluntary Wardens	300	Voluntary and paid part-time wardens who are members of a warden service
Association of National Park Officers	34	Senior national park staff
Association of Professional Foresters	750	Any individual employed in forestry industry
British Association of Nature Conservationists	760	Open to anyone with an interest in nature conservation
County Planning Officers Society	91	Chief Planning Officers and Deputies
Institute of Public Right of Way Officers	130 approx	Individuals employed in rights of way and access work
National Park Staff Association	430	All staff employed in national parks
National Association of Field Studies Officers	250	Anyone teaching or working to promote or develop field studies
Society for Interpretation of Britain's Heritage	250	Anyone interested in heritage interpretation
Working Panel of Local Authority Ecologists	100	Local government staff working at least half their time on ecological issues

Figure 19
**DEVELOPING A TRAINING PROGRAMME. A
CASE STUDY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF
NATIONAL PARK AND COUNTRYSIDE
VOLUNTARY WARDENS**

The Association of National Parks and Countryside Voluntary Wardens (ANPCVW) exists to promote effective and enjoyable wardening by volunteers throughout the countryside. Both volunteers and part time paid wardens or rangers who are members of a warden service are eligible for membership, of which there are currently 300. At their 1987 annual conference, members expressed concern that they received little or no training related to their voluntary wardening activities. Following consultation with the Countryside Commission, a range of training needs were identified and priorities for training established. A volunteer member who had some experience in adult education, developed a programme designed to provide training for voluntary wardens at two levels:

- introductory (which assumed no particular background) and
- basic (which assumed some knowledge and experience of countryside working).

A weekend residential course was organised and found to be very relevant to participants' duties and problems. Two further events are to be run in 1989 with the Countryside Commission providing some funding and back-up advice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. Professional institutes should:

- a. review their academic requirements for professional qualifications to incorporate a wider countryside perspective;
- b. widen the base of their education and training policies to embrace countryside management more fully;
- c. extend their membership to include a wider spectrum of people working in countryside management;
- d. vigorously promote continuing professional development.

10. The proposed Countryside Training Forum should review the progress of Recommendation 9 and, if necessary, consider the need for a new professional body for countryside staff.

7 DEVELOPING TRAINING SKILLS

The development of better training for countryside staff will succeed or fail through the commitment given to it by managers and decision makers, and through the availability of relevant good-quality training opportunities. These will only materialise through the expertise of competent trainers. They must understand the functions of training in its widest sense and possess the right skills and knowledge to impart to others. Yet we believe that very few people in the countryside staff training field have themselves received proper training to help them achieve their best as trainers. A lack of appreciation of training philosophy and methods, or inadequate training skills can easily result in ill-conceived training programmes, inexperienced or inappropriate trainers and poor-quality training. This in turn devalues training as a whole and reinforces prejudices against it. Making sure that those with a training role possess appropriate skills and knowledge is fundamental to the case we make for improving training provision for countryside staff.



THE TRAINERS' ROLES

7.1 Just as the 'countryside manager' can be involved in a wide range of duties and responsibilities, the trainer similarly has a number of roles to play. The prime purpose of training is to help people to learn and develop, and so improve their contribution to countryside work. This can be done in a number of ways. The 'trainer' may be, for example:

- an instructor demonstrating a skill or technique in clearly defined stages, correcting and assisting the trainee until skills are learned;
- a teacher or lecturer imparting knowledge and information to an individual or a group;
- a coach working with an individual and giving guidance, support and feedback as to how learning is progressing;
- a facilitator steering people in the right direction, but encouraging them to learn themselves by thinking and doing;
- a counsellor listening to problems and suggesting how they could be tackled and solved;
- a consultant working with senior managers to identify training needs and develop training strategies and programmes;

• a forward planner identifying future training needs and problems;

• an evaluator analysing the impact of training and making suggestions for change.

7.2 Describing the training function is not easy but we have attempted to do so diagrammatically in Figure 20. This centres initially upon an understanding of the objectives of countryside management, an awareness of the changing countryside, and also upon an understanding of how people learn and develop and can be helped to apply their skills.

7.3 Few countryside organisations have full-time specialists with responsibility for the entire training function. It is more usual to find a number of different individuals, each having a role in organising, providing and evaluating training.

There are three main groups.

a. Full-time trainers – tutors, teachers and lecturers. They are involved in identifying needs – usually in consultation with managers – planning, designing, providing and evaluating training. They may also be involved in consultancy work and dealing with administration and funding.

Figure 20



b. Occasional trainers. Those who train or tutor others, but only as part of their work. They include people with specific practical and technical skills or certain types of experience, together with skilled craftsmen and women, supervisors, line managers and senior managers. Many countryside staff act as occasional trainers. Managers, for example, have a vital role to play, both as occasional trainers and with other training functions such as identifying needs or coordinating training provision for their subordinates.

c. Training administrators. As the need for better training increases more people are being employed as administrators and coordinators. They provide clerical and administrative support to full-time and occasional trainers, and can be involved in disseminating information, identifying training opportunities, and a variety of other supportive tasks.



The trainer has many roles.

THE FULL-TIME PROFESSIONAL TRAINER

- 7.4 The watchwords for professional trainers must be **quality** and **credibility**. Countryside staff have become more discerning, and as they have become involved in a wider range of training opportunities, their knowledge of training has grown and their expectations are greater. This is evident from feedback received from the Countryside Commission sponsored courses, which now show a high level of customer satisfaction but only after significant quality improvements over a number of years. Such high expectations make it more difficult for

those organisations with less experience in providing training to make their mark.

- 7.5 There are now more appointments being made to specialist full-time training posts in both voluntary and statutory conservation organisations. But there are indications suggesting a shortage of suitable people who possess good training abilities, and an appreciation of training in its widest sense. Furthermore, there appear to be few training consultants with countryside management experience who can be called on to advise organisations wishing to develop training strategies and programmes. With full-time trainers having so many roles to play, they need an impressive range of skills. Their problem is satisfying the broad range of backgrounds, experience, ages and abilities of their countryside staff trainees. In order to earn the confidence of the customers – the trainees and their employers – a sound appreciation and knowledge of countryside issues, organisations and contemporary problems is essential. So too is real experience and in-depth knowledge in the subject of the training itself. Trainers also need to have a high level of interpersonal skills, sensitivity to people and knowledge of their own particular strengths (and weaknesses) in their approach to training. Finally, they must be well organised and able to identify correctly the needs and methods of delivering training. They may have to act, in effect, as consultants within their own organisations, advising managers on training issues. We summarise the skills we regard as important in Figure 21.

TRAINING FOR THE SPECIALIST

- 7.6 Training for specialist trainers in the field of countryside management has been unstructured and very ad hoc. That was the conclusion drawn from our trainers workshops. One participant suggested it was usually a case of 'trainer train thyself', often by means of on-the-job experience. Few had 'trainer training'. Many had moved into their work from various backgrounds, but all enjoyed working with people. Diversity of experience of this kind

Figure 21
THE SKILLS REQUIRED OF A TRAINER OF COUNTRYSIDE STAFF

• INTER-PERSONAL SKILLS - Communication - Public speaking - Presentation skills - Listening - Giving feedback - Counselling - Sensitivity • ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS - Team management - Time management - Budgeting - Planning - Prioritising - Consultancy skills	• TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE - Training needs assessment - Training theory and practice - Participative training techniques - Programme design and operation - Evaluation and assessment - Knowledge and experience in subject taught - Experimentation and research • KNOWLEDGE OF COUNTRYSIDE ORGANISATIONS - Awareness of their background - Professional functions and systems - Ethics and practices • KNOWLEDGE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE - Contemporary issues and politics - Changing land uses and values • KNOWLEDGE OF THE CUSTOMER - the 3-way partnership - the 3-strands of management
--	---

should be regarded more as a strength than a weakness for trainers in that it gives them a broad perspective on a range of issues. The majority of full-time trainers have learned their skills through working in partnership with an experienced trainer who acts as a coach, or through observing other trainers at work, and generally 'learning by doing'. Some have been trained as teachers and, while possessing the ability to impart knowledge to others, have little experience of participative training methods and developing in-service training. This has to be seen against the background of many lecturers in higher education still having received little formal tuition in teaching or training skills. We believe this situation should be radically improved, particularly as they are increasingly being expected to assess training

needs, and to develop and evaluate in-service training, as well as advise others. More alarmingly, some teaching staff are being called upon to lecture in areas where they have very little substantive knowledge, and little experience as practitioners. We have seen evidence of this particularly in agricultural colleges where staff with first-class expertise in aspects of agricultural production are now expected to teach 'countryside conservation' or 'recreation management' courses despite their obviously incomplete knowledge and experience.

7.7 A wealth of training opportunities exists for trainers working in industry and commerce, and there are some for trainers in voluntary organisations. Provision for trainers of countryside staff is considerably limited, and many are

inevitably forced to look to a wider market place. For example, The Industrial Society, Civil Service College and the British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education (BACIE), offer a variety of trainer-training modules. A number of short training course opportunities aimed at trainers of countryside staff are shown in Appendix 4. Training qualifications can be gained through study for the Institute of Personnel Management examinations, as part of a Diploma in Management Studies (DMS), through a Masters Degree at Sheffield University and by study for a certificate or diploma of the Institute for Training and Development (ITD)¹, the professional body for trainers. A City and Guilds certificate in direct training is also available. Few countryside trainers have such qualifications or have sought membership of ITD, viewing these as insufficiently practical or relevant to their needs. However, a recently established lead body for Training and Development will, in due course, agree on competencies, occupational standards and qualifications. Until then there are some good examples of staff development by way of secondments and exchanges. For example, a tutor from Capel Manor exchanged with a ranger from the Hertfordshire County Council Countryside Management Service for a month. Sheffield Polytechnic seconded a lecturer from the Recreation Department to work with Sheffield City Council, developing environmental projects within the city. We applaud imaginative training of this sort – it increases credibility, competence and confidence.

DEVELOPING NETWORKS

- 7.8 Specialist trainers are usually engaged individually or as part of a small team within a larger organisation. They can feel isolated and need contacts to generate ideas, exchange information and keep up to date. Our trainers workshop strongly recommended that better networks should be available to back up whatever personal contacts are used. Some providers of countryside training have also set up their own, and we note that the Environment and Training Group brings together

residential countryside training providers and the Countryside Commission organises regular meetings of their sponsored short-course providers. The Interpretive Training Consortium coordinated by the Centre for Environmental Interpretation provides a forum for the staff from government agencies who are responsible for national training initiatives in this field, and workshops for those running interpretive short courses are organised. Further support is needed for trainers outside these existing networks to bring them together to exchange ideas and develop their skills.

OCCASIONAL TRAINERS AND INSTRUCTORS

- 7.9 Many countryside staff are 'occasional trainers' – presenting talks, giving on-the-job skills instruction, organising in-house briefings and lecturing in colleges. Their contribution is considerable – though often unacknowledged. Almost certainly such staff will not have received any formal trainer training although they require a range of skills and knowledge, as shown in Figure 22. The lack of training provision for such trainers arises from the general misconception that 'if you can do it you can teach it' – although many will testify to the boredom generated by technical experts who lack the ability to communicate. While some staff may be expected to contribute frequently to in-house training sessions, even to organise them, rarely are they given the time and encouragement to train for these roles. Practitioners with training skills can be highly valuable to an organisation, by team building, through the sharing of experience, avoiding the need to bring in expensive outside specialists, and providing a practitioner's dimension to formal education courses.
- 7.10 Advisory staff in organisations such as the Countryside Commission have a key role to play in promoting improvements in training practices and in advising how such improvements can be made. Few such staff have experience of advising on training provision but developing their skills and knowledge would be an effective way to reach a wide

number of organisations quickly and help to implement CSTAG's proposals.

- 7.11 Short courses providing suitable training for occasional trainers are also shown in Appendix 4, although a range of considerably more costly opportunities are available in the private sector. Generally, countryside-related opportunities are limited, although if all the individuals involved in occasional training sought formal tuition, demand would exceed supply.² Other methods are available, for example the Industrial Society uses practising managers as occasional trainers to deliver short courses to a high standard. The Forestry Training Council, concerned about the standards of its occasional trainers, has devised an accreditation scheme. Occasional instructors who fulfil the criteria of three years' experience, a knowledge of practical skills and good instructional ability can achieve the status of accredited trainers through following a formal training programme.

Figure 22
THE SKILLS NEEDED BY THE
OCCASIONAL TRAINER

- A basic knowledge of training philosophy.
- An understanding of how people learn.
- Basic training techniques and the skills to use them.
- A knowledge of countryside and environment issues.
- A knowledge of training styles, methods and resources.
- An ability to carry out a job breakdown and establish training objectives.
- An ability to plan training sessions.
- Knowledge of how to evaluate feedback and record trainees' progress.
- An awareness of abilities, strengths and weaknesses as a trainer.

THE MANAGER AND TRAINING

- 7.12 We have noted that the more managers who become involved with, and supportive of,

training within their organisation, the higher the priority it receives. We note, too, how tenuous the link between senior management and the training function can be. For training to succeed properly in assisting both personal and organisational development, it must be seen as part and parcel of good management practice; it should not be isolated from other management responsibilities. Any managers worth their salt should be actively concerned with developing the skills of their staff by ensuring that sound training is provided and by being part of the training team.³ This applies just as much to those bodies in the countryside sector as to any hi-tech industrial company. We make no apologies for reiterating here some universal principles involving those in managerial positions. Their application to countryside staff training is no less valid than elsewhere.

- 7.13 Senior managers are likely to be the most influential in developing supportive attitudes to training within an organisation. If they show little interest others are likely to be equally negative. Line managers can also contribute a great deal to creating the right climate. They should be in the best position to recognise the training needs of their staff; should know the individuals concerned, and be familiar with their strengths and weaknesses; and are best able to appreciate the complexities and requirements of their jobs. They should also be able to provide post-training support for their staff, assisting them in implementing new skills.

- 7.14 Managers can be invaluable as trainers in a number of ways. Whether providing specialist input to a training event, or acting as a lecturer, tutor or course coordinator, they possess valuable skills and experience and should be encouraged to participate in in-house training, and to contribute to the training events held by other organisations. Their involvement with all stages of the training cycle, by having responsibility for identifying needs, and in planning, providing and evaluating training, is vital. We have summarised the various ways in which we see managers performing their key role in Figure 23.

Figure 23

MANAGERS' INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

LINE MANAGER/SUPERVISOR

Roles in organisational development

Strategic planning of training
Developing organisational training philosophy and objectives
Allocating budgets
Promoting sources of advice and expertise
Identifying organisational training needs
Evaluating training and its impact on organisational development
Liaising with training providers

Providing feedback to managers on training needs
Working with organisation's training objectives and budget
Identifying needs
Facilitating training provision
Evaluating and reviewing results

Roles in providing direct training

Guidance to line managers and staff
Counselling
Coaching
On-the-job training
Occasional contribution to training events
Giving feedback

Guidance to staff
Counselling
Coaching
On-the-job training
Giving instruction and occasional contributions to training events
Giving feedback

7.15 A successful managerial contribution to staff training means having an awareness and an understanding of what good training can produce. It would be unrealistic of us to expect managers to develop the level of ability shown by competent full-time professional trainers, but we regard it as very important that to promote training they should be able to:

- understand its purposes;
- encourage their staff to want to learn and develop;
- identify needs;
- establish objectives;
- be aware of relevant opportunities or have access to specialist services;
- provide a supportive environment;
- ensure that training is carried out and evaluated.

The effectiveness of training the managers to train can be illustrated by the example of the Yorkshire Water Authority⁴. The authority selected 30 line managers to be trained as 'facilitators' to run in-house training programmes. This enabled over 1,300 staff to receive enhanced training in management and supervisory responsibilities over a two-year period. We feel that all management development courses should include the subject of the manager's role as a trainer. Even if managers are not actively involved as trainers they must be able to explain their training needs to specialists and consultants, and have sufficient expertise to provide a clear brief. There appear to be many organisations offering management training in various forms, but we are not convinced that all of them properly address the 'trainer' function of a manager.

THE TRAINING ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE

- 7.16 Many organisations use the services of a coordinator or facilitator as a training administrator, sometimes as part of the personnel team. Their job includes suggesting the right training opportunities, organising courses, administering funding for training and promoting events. Importantly for countryside bodies, they must be aware of the variety of sources of countryside training and consider their relevance and quality. Opportunities for training in this particular field are very limited. Although there are some general courses on administration run for countryside staff, most of the skills needed to organise effective training are learned 'on the job'. Below we give an example of a new course currently available through BACIE, but we emphasise that as yet no similar event has been designed to serve the particular needs in the countryside sector.

TRAINING FOR OTHER SPECIALISTS

- 7.17 Once the lead industry bodies have set standards of competence and have agreed qualifications, there will be an emphasis on the need for experienced training assessors. Methods of assessing the effectiveness of training initiatives will be needed – and training in them! To date very little has been undertaken in this area –

largely because so little countryside training has been validated or properly assessed. Methods of assessing work-based training, (which will be an integral part of the NCVQ system), are under review, and these will have implications for managers and supervisors as well as for external assessors. But we feel it is too early to predict what they might be.

MAINTAINING THE QUALITY OF TRAINING

- 7.18 How can managers and others using outside training expertise identify high quality opportunities? Some training providers acknowledge that in-service training for countryside staff is an expanding sector so they are widening their involvement; and the advent of ET and YTS has resulted in many new – and often inexperienced – training organisations being set up. How can they be assessed? We suggest much the same type of approach is taken to that of choosing consultants: select according to their ability to fulfill a brief, give value for money, and fit their approach to that of the contracting organisation. In Figure 25 we offer a checklist of questions which a potential contractor might be asked. Posing such questions not only helps to underline the importance attached to quality and relevant experience but also encourages the adoption of better practices.

Figure 24

EXAMPLE OF A SHORT COURSE FOR TRAINING ADMINISTRATORS

EFFECTIVE TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

2 Days Non-Residential

AIMS

This course aims to provide a structured practical approach to organising training and other events.

At the end of the course participants will:

- have the knowledge and skill to administer the nomination process for both internal and external courses
- have the knowledge and skill to organise training courses and other events
- be able to set up and maintain an effective record system
- be able to prepare budgetary information
- be able to prepare and structure correspondence
- be able to summarise and evaluate the event
- have the opportunity to practise presentation skills for introducing and closing courses
- be aware of practical sources of information

METHOD

This course is a step-by-step guide to planning and organising a successful event. Inputs of information will be complemented with syndicate work, practical exercises, films, handouts and a small proportion of closed circuit TV.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This course is designed for newly appointed course administrators and course organisers. Current training personnel who are looking for a fresh approach may also benefit. It is also suitable for secretaries/PAs and other personnel who find a large proportion of their time is spent arranging meetings, conferences, incentives, etc.

Figure 25

A CHECKLIST FOR ASSESSING TRAINING PROVIDERS

- What is the experience and training record of the trainers and tutors — both generally and in the countryside sector?
- Is there an actively implemented staff development policy?
- Can the staff (or their parent organisation) demonstrate a good track record for providing countryside staff training?
- Is the training they offer endorsed or sponsored by countryside organisations such as BTCV, NCC, CC?
- Does the philosophy and approach of the trainers fit in with that of the contracting organisation?
- How well do they understand the aims and objectives of countryside bodies?
- What use is made of countryside conservation and recreation studies and projects and is it intended to involve practitioners?
- How have their training activities been evaluated and what are the results?
- Is there any feedback available from staff, colleagues or others?

7.19

In this chapter we have tried to stress the fundamental importance of sound training for those who train others. We consider there are many shortcomings in the extent, quality and content of training aimed at trainers in the field embraced by our remit. These deficiencies are neither easily nor quickly rectified. But we put forward the following recommendations as key steps to be taken in efforts to improve the quality of training for countryside staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. All full-time and occasional trainers of countryside staff should:

- a. review on a regular basis their experience and portfolio of skills to ensure that they:
 - meet the expectations of their clients,
 - cover the need for communication and training skills,
 - have an appropriate level of qualification, knowledge and experience of the subjects taught;
- b. improve their training skills and share experiences by contact with other trainers.

12. Managers of all countryside staff should:

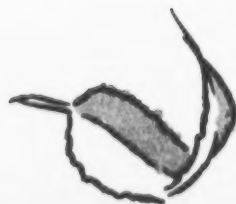
- a. recognise their training role and influence, and accept their responsibility to provide effective training and guidance for their staff;
- b. develop training strategies and programmes, support the appointment of staff with responsibility for training and its administration, and encourage the use of other staff as occasional trainers;
- c. undertake further training where necessary to enable them to play an effective training role.

13. The Countryside Commission should help to improve the amount and quality of training expertise by:

- a. working with countryside organisations and training providers to increase the opportunities for both full-time and occasional trainers to develop their skills;
- b. setting up a pilot scheme to develop managers as trainers;
- c. equipping their own advisory staff to provide advice and information on countryside staff training.

8 A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

Here we take a strategic view and place the various parts of our arguments for improving training in a common framework. We suggest that using the notions of key skills and core knowledge and building the three strands of management into the training cycle, a versatile programme for training staff can be put together. We look ahead and propose how such a programme can satisfy training needs; and how it can complement staff career development.



DEVELOPING A NEW FRAMEWORK

- 8.1 Seldom has there been a better opportunity to set a new pattern for the future. The advent of vocational standards and qualifications, the more positive attitudes to in-service training, and the growing competitive and entrepreneurial climate within further and higher education are all signs of a new order of things. Many of the organisations we have referred to in our report are seeking more advice and guidance on the best way to make progress. We think that presenting a framework for training will assist them – and others – to respond to our recommendations.
- 8.2 We have explained how difficult it is to detect any logical pattern to the qualifications or training for countryside staff at the moment. Few people have a clear picture of what is available and how it fits together, let alone whether particular opportunities are sound and relevant. Through the workshops we have developed our thinking on the key skills, core knowledge and the three strands of management that we consider are essential for all countryside staff. But we have found how rarely they are included in the plethora of syllabuses and training programmes currently on offer. We hope our suggestion for a framework will serve to show how they might be included in a balanced way.
- 8.3 Our aim is for this framework to assist in designing training opportunities for most situations involving countryside staff. For those hoping to find work in countryside conservation and recreation, it can be regarded as a self-assessment guide, helping to identify areas of need and indicating the relevance of proposed training. We feel that one of its most valuable uses is in guiding employers and training providers. It should help in identifying needs and developing training programmes; informing validators and enabling them to assess countryside training proposals; and providing complementary information for the work on standards and qualifications being carried out by the NCVQ and COSQUEC. Although we

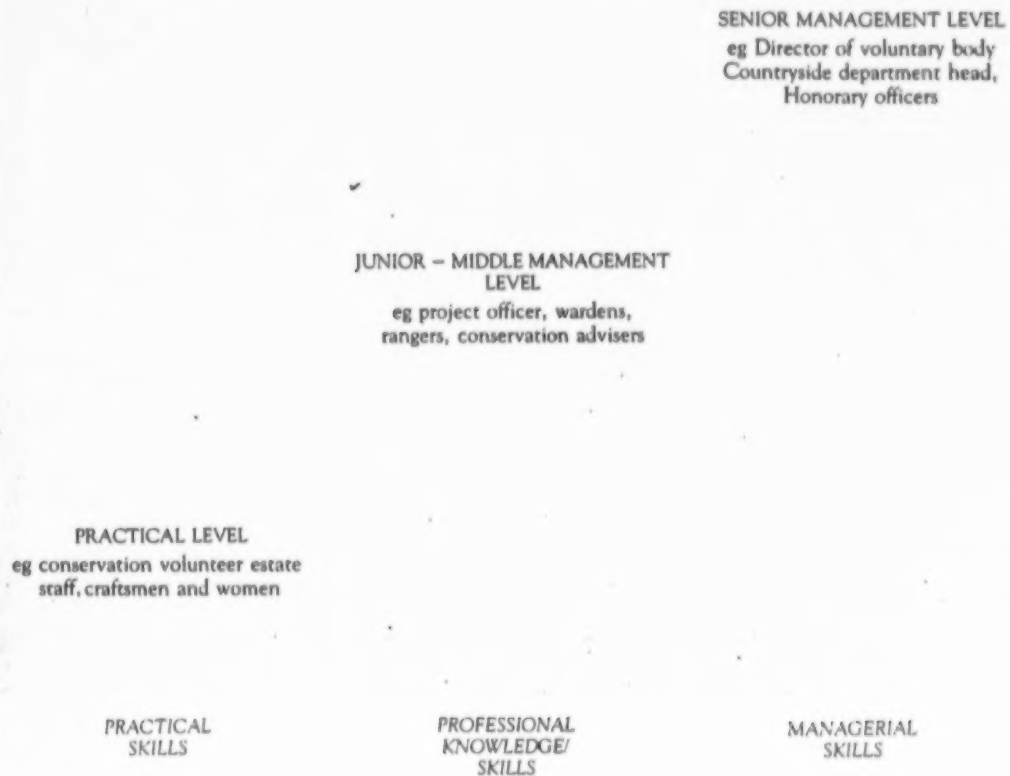
have not looked specifically at training for land managers involved in primary production, such as farmers and foresters, we believe that our findings are relevant to them as their role in conserving the countryside and helping people to enjoy it grows. The framework should help those involved in agricultural education and training to adapt accordingly.

- 8.4 We must make clear, however, that the framework is not meant to be prescriptive. We see it as akin to a map showing some of the main paths that can be followed by countryside staff along the route to better training. From time to time, like a map, its features must be updated and revised; space is left for new areas to be added and then later incorporated into the main framework. It illustrates how key skills, core knowledge and the three strands of management can fit together like a jigsaw. For example, these can be broken down into their basic units and then built up piece by piece to complete the picture. If parts are missing it should be possible to see the gaps. Most important is the integration of separate modules and for each of these to be set or taught within an all embracing context.

USING THE FRAMEWORK

- 8.5 The framework, which is set out in Appendix 10, is intended for use at different levels of complexity and to be applicable to all countryside staff. Whether they work at the practical level, as volunteers, or as junior, middle or senior managers, the aim is to get the right balance between practical skills, professional knowledge and skills and managerial ability. Figure 26 suggests how this balance can change at different work levels. In small organisations or departments, staff may have to work across all these levels of responsibility. Rangers and project officers working alone, for example, might maintain footpaths, lead guided walks, write reports and run meetings all in the course of a day's work. Many are moving into the managerial sphere as their responsibilities change. Our framework should help also as a checklist to aid discussion and assessment of

Figure 26
CHANGING SKILL REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF AT DIFFERENT GRADES



8

At the senior management level – the requirement is a broad understanding of a wide range of issues, supportive detailed knowledge and fully developed skills in management, forward planning and working with people.

At the junior to middle management level – there should be detailed knowledge and skills of their professional area together with supervisory, managerial and practical skills, according to job requirements.

At the practical level – conservation volunteers, estate staff and craftsmen and women need practical skills together with an understanding of the objectives, and organisational and environmental context of their work.

training needs. For general countryside management it can be used as it stands but the content would need to be adapted for specific types of work. For example, an organisation concerned with coastal management would focus its programme more towards coastal habitats, landscapes or visitor safety while retaining the broad overall context.

- 8.6 A training regime that embraces each of the main elements in the framework should give a comprehensive and balanced introduction to countryside work, with two provisos. First, the training must include practical work, through work experience or practical projects. Colleges should build in periods of work experience and employers should give greater support for trainees. Second, because a syllabus or programme is only as good as its tutors, they too must have suitable work experience, communication skills and training. The framework also has potential in strategic planning by organisations that support, develop or validate training. This facility might usefully be programmed into the proposed National Countryside Training Information Service database and we think that COSQUEC should consider carrying out a similar exercise during its assessment of countryside conservation and recreation qualifications.

A FRAMEWORK FOR COUNTRYSIDE TRAINING MODULES AND QUALIFICATIONS

- 8.7 The framework lends itself to the modular approach to training, which is likely to be used more frequently once National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) for conservation and recreation are in place. Using different sources and methods of training it will be possible to build up a portfolio of units leading to a recognised qualification. Our framework provides for essential common elements plus a broad range of possible units from which there is potential to develop specialist options. Each unit within the framework can be developed to include progressive levels of detail. We give an example in Figure 27, but consider that it is for

COSQUEC and other lead bodies to take the initiative here.

- 8.8 COSQUEC, with members drawn from the environmental employment sector, will define which skills and knowledge are needed and the standards of competence and performance criteria required, and will develop a coherent system of NVQs. Figure 28 gives an example for one area of work. The Council will also liaise with related lead bodies who will need to include conservation and amenity aspects in their work; agriculture and forestry for example. Work experience, in-house and other training can all count towards qualifications, provided that the agreed national standards are met. This flexibility will benefit countryside staff and help to reduce current problems arising from rural isolation and poor access to sources of validated training.

- 8.9 There are, however, some potential drawbacks in building up qualifications in this way. We can see three. First, the elements of competence and performance criteria must be very carefully defined for the less tangible but nonetheless vital aspects of countryside management work, such as general attitudes and broad background information. These aspects must be incorporated and assessors alerted to their importance alongside the more easily evaluated practical skills. Second, there should be a final assessment demonstrating a practical ability to work in a multi-disciplinary way and integrate a wide range of subject areas. Third, countryside management work is evolving and new areas emerging, so there must be scope for these to be incorporated.

LOOKING AHEAD

- 8.10 Future training needs are inextricably bound up with the changing countryside and its evolving social and economic functions. There are sure to be demands for new skills and types of countryside staff. The following is a brief overview of some of the main contemporary trends in the training field.

Figure 27
DEVELOPING UNITS OF THE FRAMEWORK

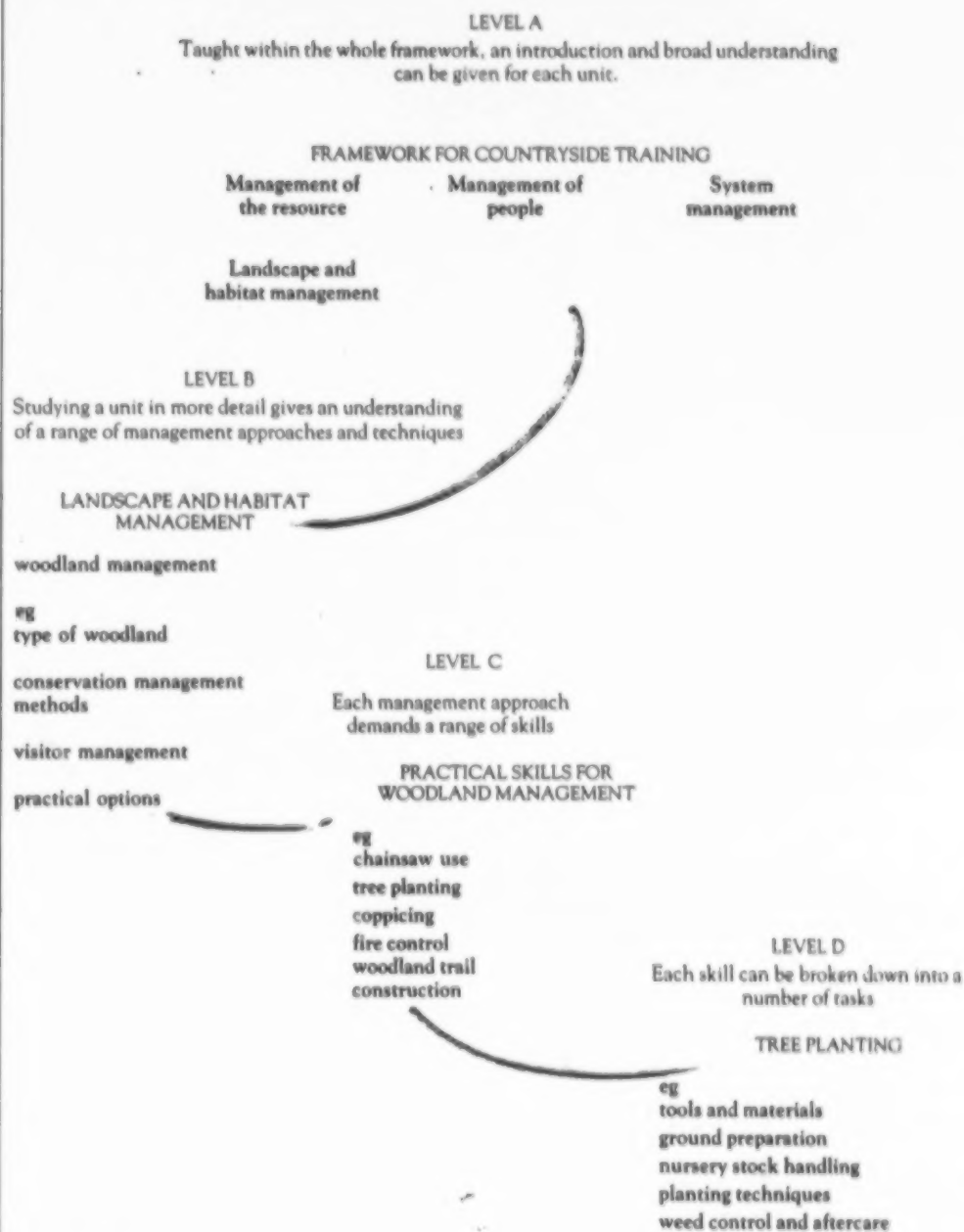


Figure 28

EXAMPLES OF COMPETENCES AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Statement of competence	Units of competence	Elements of competence	Performance criteria
eg Successfully give a talk to a range of audiences		eg within giving a talk	
	collate material	audience contact	Material clear and audible?
	research audience	deliver material clearly	Material relevant to audience?
	prepare talk	use visual aids	Evidence of audience interest
	prepare equipment and room	use of introduction and conclusion	Positive response?
	give talk	convey message	Message clear?
	respond to questions	seek feedback	
	follow-up		

PRACTICAL COUNTRYSIDE SKILLS

- 8.11 The scale of the practical task of conserving the countryside and providing for recreation became apparent when the Community Programme ended. Its demise has created a hiatus, with much work to be done, but as yet few established ways of making it happen. The most likely options include: greater roles for farmers and landowners; increased involvement of volunteers and private contractors; and the creation of new sources such as the Countryside Task Force proposed by the Countryside Commission, the Countryside Management YTS put forward by the National Trust and programmes devised by employers under ET and other schemes. More training in countryside skills will be needed whichever options are pursued.

TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- 8.12 Our workshops highlighted future training needs arising from the changing roles of technical and professional staff.
- **Landscape and nature conservation specialists**
- In our vision of a much more multi-purpose countryside, the greater integration of nature

conservation with other land uses will require better interaction between these specialists. Increasingly there is a need for more 'conservation generalists' – people who have crossed the historical landscape/wildlife divide – can offer balanced and integrated advice about countryside conservation, yet indicate other sources where specialised expertise can be obtained. Landscape specialists need more knowledge of agriculture, ecology, the principles of landscape conservation (rather than detailed practice), and experience on the larger countryside scale. On the other hand, nature conservationists will benefit from more knowledge of the principles of aesthetics and design, rural policy and land use, and countryside planning and management.

- **Rangers, wardens and other recreation managers**

The range of responsibilities is broadening, and while they still need skills for some practical countryside tasks, their roles increasingly require management skills. Rangers and project officers must be able to coordinate others, plan ahead, carry out liaison work and contract management, and some will need to become

entrepreneurs, skilfully generating income and working cost effectively in a way that is sympathetic to the countryside. These trends are likely to intensify and necessitate better managerial and communication skills as well as basic technical training.

• Trainers

As chapter 7 showed, there is a rapidly growing demand for experienced and trained trainers able to work directly with countryside staff and volunteers, and able to plan and develop training or advise others to do so.

• All staff

Any staff working in a multi-disciplinary field must become multi-skilled but with sufficient knowledge of other fields to know when and where to find specialist advice. Versatility and flexibility will become increasingly important, together with more positive attitudes to change. Skills already in demand include information technology, fund raising, financial management, training skills, marketing and publicity.

• Specialists

We support the findings on training in the European environmental field¹ which forecast the need for better trained environmental managers equipped with a broad knowledge and experience of their own sector, a thorough understanding of the policy context, and with skills in management, planning, administration and communication. There will almost certainly be greater need too, for expertise in implementing environmental policies and legislation. Specialists will be required to monitor pollution, organise and analyse environmental information, and carry out site management. Advisers will be in demand, especially from smaller organisations without the resources to employ their own experts – farmers and landowners, small businesses and many local authorities, for example.

• Managers

We have already drawn attention to managerial skills being common to all types of countryside workers and to the trends towards extra man-

agerial responsibilities for many staff. Business skills and an awareness of the political and financial context of the countryside were emphasised by our workshop participants as increasingly important areas.

• Volunteers and those working with them

Current trends indicate strongly that current growth in volunteer involvement in the countryside will continue to increase. In order to make the most of volunteers, staff working with them must recognise two things. First, that whether people volunteer only once or make a long-term commitment, they have many of the same training needs as paid staff. Second, because the motivations and expectations of volunteers vary widely and often differ from those of paid staff, volunteers have special training needs. These include developing confidence and helping them to use skills and to teach others. People are not always skilled in the tasks for which they have volunteered their help. Training in itself helps to underline that volunteer work is important. People working with volunteers may need additional training to enable them to respond better in future to these needs and to take a more professional approach to voluntary staff.

CAREERS IN COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT

- 8.13 We have been made aware of concerns about the apparent lack of a career structure in countryside management and the difficulties in following a recognised career path. Given the relatively small size of the great majority of conservation bodies and different departmental structures in local authorities – as well as the slow rate of staff turnover – we fear that for many, this will remain a problem. Those keen to pursue a career usually have to zigzag between different employers and jobs, gaining new skills and experience with each move – but often finding that additional responsibilities are not financially rewarded. It seems that some employers do not fully recognise the breadth of responsibility or skills that countryside staff require: we have noted instances

of demanding posts maintained at far lower grades and salaries than would be justified elsewhere. In recent years mobility has been restricted by regional variations in the cost of living, with some employers, particularly in southern England, offering incentives to attract more experienced and better qualified staff.

- 8.14 Inevitably, the diversity of countryside management work will mean that there can be no hard and fast rules either for entry to, or careers through, the various occupational paths. Specialist posts such as ecologists and landscape architects will continue to require high-level qualifications, but there will always be opportunities for people with training in other subjects, and for those with few or no qualifications but with suitable work experience. However, there is evidence that more employers are beginning to look for staff with qualifications that they feel make applicants better suited to fill the vacant post. For example, the NCC is now far more frequently appointing wardens with degree-level qualifications for their reserves. In the national parks, on the other hand, work experience, local knowledge and a suitable personality are rated just as highly as a formal qualification for rangers' posts, although here again there seems to be a trend towards successful applicants having qualifications.

- 8.15 Those who are intent upon creating a career in the countryside are increasingly aware of the need to have relevant qualifications and training. Sometimes they find progression difficult because suitable opportunities are unavailable locally. In some public sector jobs, promotion prospects may be limited for those without the right professional qualifications. We have commented on the role of the professional bodies in chapter 6 and we hope our suggestions will help to alleviate this particular problem. The voluntary sector, on the other hand, appears to be more flexible, often giving greater consideration to those with experience and commitment. Only in government agencies, the larger voluntary bodies and in local authority departments are job responsibilities and salaries better defined and structured. A clearer path

does appear to exist but those eligible for promotion will always exceed the number of openings, particularly as there has been disproportionate growth in lower to middle-level posts. We are forced to conclude that, outside large organisations, changing jobs remains the most likely route to career development and promotion. But we note that those who seek training, and who are prepared to learn new skills and take on new roles and responsibilities, are more likely to create good career opportunities for themselves. Again the diversity of occupations in the countryside sector provides a valuable resource as a career ladder and we see no evidence of a lack of talent at any level of responsibility.

- 8.16 Nevertheless, there are a number of ways by which staff can be helped to obtain promotion and greater job satisfaction. The wardens and rangers workshop pinpointed a need to improve career prospects for those who seek advancement. Training is important in this respect and is increasing the skills and job satisfaction of people remaining in their existing jobs. It is not practical to prescribe a model career structure because employers will always seek to organise their staff in ways which suit the corporate interest best. But we believe that employers would be wise to consider how to improve staff structures and grades, career development, and conditions of service in order to motivate and keep good staff. For example, job descriptions frequently bear little relationships to the work being done, so their revision would clarify roles considerably and help to identify training needs. Where promotion prospects are inevitably limited, secondments, study visits and other training to stimulate and stretch staff will encourage greater job satisfaction. Staff must themselves acknowledge the constraints inherent in their occupational field and be prepared to broaden their experience within an existing job or to move sideways prior to promotion. Although countryside work is likely to remain attractive to many, we believe it is dangerous to assume that the supply of sufficient numbers of good-quality applicants will be maintained. Employers must plan how they intend to continue to attract good-quality, motivated staff

in the face of greater competition from other sectors. There is no doubt in our mind that developing good training schemes and improving career prospects will enhance an organisation's standing and image, raise staff motivation, and help to retain staff.

- 8.12 To help to create a more rational and effective approach to the training of countryside staff there must be a clear overall plan for the needs of both organisations and staff. Future training needs are likely to be much more demanding than hitherto and require a greater degree of flexibility. As the countryside continues to change so will the expectations of those involved at whatever level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

14. All with responsibility for countryside staff should use the suggested 'training framework' as a basis for developing training strategies and programmes.

15. COSQUEC, other lead bodies and examining and validating bodies involved with the countryside sector should:

- a. use the 'training framework' as a means to identify the training needs of countryside staff;
- b. ensure that qualifications are available at a variety of levels to cover the full range of countryside needs at a variety of levels;
- c. establish ways of integrating subject areas to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach.

16. Employers and managers should assist career development of the staff under their control by:

- a. providing training opportunities to enhance staff prospects;
- b. clearly defining job descriptions and staff structures and grades;
- c. ensuring that those who remain in a particular role, either through choice or lack of career opportunities, receive training which aims to
 - improve job satisfaction,
 - develop individual responsibility,
 - encourage the development and use of their potential.



Training improves career prospects and enhances job satisfaction.

9 TRAINING FOR TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE

In our final chapter we outline how our aspirations for better training might be realised. We look at the question of funding and – importantly – at the costs of not investing in training, and we anticipate some of the benefits arising out of our suggested approach.



- 9.1 Achieving an all-round improvement in the training of people to better equip them for the challenges facing the countryside requires changes of attitudes and practices reaching far beyond the remit of the Countryside Commission. We have made a number of recommendations aimed at all with an interest in this subject: organisations and individuals, government agencies, countryside employers and their staff, training providers, validating and examining organisations, professional bodies, and education establishments. Whilst some organisations may simply need to improve their awareness of, and response to, countryside issues, we hope that others will accept the need for more fundamental change.
- 9.2 Training deserves a much higher priority and must become an integral part of management policy. However, making changes to training policies alone is not enough. Unless these are backed by realistic resources their effectiveness could be illusory. Training demands a long-term investment philosophy, and the greatest rewards will accrue to those who maintain their contributions and commitment.

CURRENT SOURCES OF FUNDING

- 9.3 Funds for supporting the costs of countryside training come from a variety of sources. Figure 29 summarises the main ones; the publication *Paying for training*¹ gives more details of many of these. The Training Agency provides considerable funding to help bodies assess and develop their training needs, but much of it has been for one-off projects with little for training in countryside conservation and recreation. Similarly, EC funding sources for training in the environmental field have only helped specific projects. Once in employment most training costs are covered by employers but, as we have pointed out, the amount is very variable with individuals sometimes having to pay for their own in-service training. A number of companies encourage training through grant aid and sponsorship, such as BP, Esso and Marks and Spencer. Charities like the Carnegie UK Trust and Ernest Cook Trust also help

voluntary groups and others with training funds.

- 9.4 The Countryside Commission, Rural Development Commission and the Nature Conservancy Council are the main funding sources to help countryside organisations. In 1988-89 the NCC spent over £200,000 (including staff costs) on support for national external training. Over the same period, the Countryside Commission committed £176,000 (excluding staff costs) on similar external training initiatives. Its main policy is to sponsor 50 per cent of course fees for approved courses on an annual basis and, through other grants, to help voluntary bodies to provide or develop their own training which they could otherwise not afford. The RDC supports rural crafts and skills training and can provide support for training for the entrepreneurial and business side of the rural sector.
- 9.5 Many countryside staff employers also contribute substantially to training costs, particularly in supporting attendance at external training. Figure 4 gives examples of those active in their field — and, incidentally, shows how different both levels of spending and approaches can be. We know from staff and employers attending our workshops, that while some get regular training and are reasonably content, others get little or none. A survey of practices in commercial companies² found many to be unaware of the extent of spending on training, with some managers unhappy about the consequences if the costs became known, fearing moves to reduce them. The research also showed that only one-third of the employers surveyed had specific training budgets. For many countryside employers too, there is often no separate training budget; but where it does exist, it tends to reflect only the amount spent directly on external training, often excluding on-the-job or other in-house training costs and the time of internal staff who train others.

CAN WE AFFORD NOT TO TRAIN?

- 9.6 In considering resources for training, the costs of not investing in training should also be taken into

account. These include the following items:

- **Under-used staff capabilities:** if individual staff skills are not fully used, they cannot give of their best. Informed and motivated staff, on the other hand, work well, are happier and encourage the performance of others.
- **The costs of remedying delays and mistakes:** if people do not know how to do their jobs properly delays or mistakes will result, which can cost time or money to remedy.
- **Increased recruitment costs:** training helps to motivate staff. Those who feel their potential is not being used or developed may leave for more rewarding work, resulting in increased recruitment costs. A comparison of the costs of recruiting new staff with the training or developing of existing staff can be very revealing. One of our workshops noted that, in some organisations, the cost of advertising just a few vacancies exceeded their total training budget.
- **Inadequate use of expensive equipment:** computer systems and other costly items have often been bought, only to find that staff cannot use them fully through lack of time or money for training.



Training helps to motivate staff

- 9.7 The first step any organisation should make in developing and resourcing their staff training effort is to look at two things: first, the **real costs of training**; and second, whether these resources — which may be considerable

— are being effectively spent in relation to the training needs identified. In the code of good training practice for employers and managers, we suggested aiming for a training budget equivalent to around 5 per cent of total salary costs. We based this upon sums currently spent by businesses with good training practice and the Civil Service record. Such a figure includes the costs of employing training specialists, paying for external training, staff time in developing and providing training, travel costs, materials, and so on. Many organisations account for only part of their real training costs. We anticipate that some will already be meeting this target and extra funds may not be necessary; but our impression is that many others will need to consider carefully how they can match the record of the best.

MAKING THE CASE

- 9.8 Elsewhere in our report, we mention the comments we have received suggesting that resources for training are often very inadequate. This reflects the difficult problem of demonstrating immediately visible or measurable returns from training to help attract funding or sponsorship, whether from internal, commercial, charitable or public sources. Another, related issue is the absence of a generally agreed method of evaluating training. Initial findings from Countryside Commission research into this problem suggest that evaluation in itself stimulates more thought about the benefits of training. The Training Agency insists on monitoring and evaluating YTS and ET projects by means of training diaries, supervisor assessment and a programme review by all parties. All training should be evaluated, and better evaluation methods and more effective demonstration of the benefits are needed for the countryside sector, together with examples of good practice.

- 9.9 We believe that it is very short-sighted to accord training a low priority or poor resources. Good training is a key investment in an organisation's most important resource — the

Figure 29

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR COUNTRYSIDE STAFF TRAINING

SOURCE	TYPE OF SUPPORT
General	Grants to students taking qualifications
Local authorities	
Department of Employment/ Training Agency	Support to YTS and ET schemes Training research and development funds Support to industry lead bodies
Private industry	Sponsorship of training events and sometimes specialist staff Secondment of staff for training initiatives
Charitable trusts	Grants to organisations to develop training and to individuals to undertake it
Countryside management and recreation organisations	
Employers (public, private and voluntary)	Support to staff to attend external training events Specialist staff sometimes employed Development of in-house events
Countryside Commission	Research and development in training Grants to voluntary organisations 50 per cent sponsorship of eligible participants on national training courses Advice and information on sources of training and to training providers and validators Regional support to training centres and staff
Nature Conservancy Council	Development of courses and training materials Grants to voluntary organisations Some support to individuals attending training Advice and information on developing training
Rural Development Commission	Short courses in rural crafts and skills, many leading to validated qualifications Support training for rural business establishment and management New Entrants Training Schemes for trainees and apprentices.
Other government organisations e.g. Forestry Commission, CADW, English Tourist Board, English Heritage	Development of training related to their remits
Professional bodies	Provision of opportunities for continuing professional development
Individuals	Paying for own training and development
EEC	Grants to various aspects of environmental training through directorates of education, agriculture and the environment European Social Fund A training in the environmental field initiative supported research and pilot projects

people who run it and carry out its work. Training adds value to an operation too. Whilst some sponsors may prefer to support more tangible projects – building or tree planting schemes – we hope others will be persuaded otherwise. Providing funds for well-structured training should be regarded as having benefits at least on a par with any other cause. Both employers and funding organisations must be aware of the changing tide affecting training in general. Those who ignore growing demands for more and better training for countryside staff are less likely to be considered as responsible employers and will lose out on the increasingly competitive future job market. Industrial and commercial interests, alive to the advent of the unified European market of 1992, are already devoting a much higher priority to training. The implications for employers of countryside staff should be clear: unless comparable efforts are made, poorer quality staff with lower performance standards will result.

- 9.10 A number of recommendations in our report will require significant additional resources; others may need only better organisation or changed attitudes. But our workshops provided much evidence to suggest that, for many, the Countryside Commission plays one of the most crucial roles in assisting countryside staff training. In setting standards for training practice, giving advice and help, and especially in providing grant aid, the Commission's assistance in encouraging better training is immensely valuable. Particularly important is the role of the Commission in seeking to improve practices by making some grant aid conditional on a minimum training requirement. We see this as highly effective approach that deserves emulation by others. For example, much countryside work and training is supported financially by both the public and the private sector and also charitable trusts, and normally recipients only have to justify their application and demonstrate the work has been completed. Few funding organisations attach conditions requiring properly trained staff to carry out the task.

Several improvements are needed: applicants for grant aid or other funding should be able to show adherence to our codes of good training practice; all grant aided countryside staff should have training profiles drawn up; and project reports must include a section on training.

- 9.11 The support given by the Commission, and others, to develop in-house and external training opportunities has been invaluable. Sponsored short courses are well received on the whole, by employers and staff alike, and the subsidy brings them within the reach of many who might otherwise be unable to attend. Our review of training has identified the need for a broader range of opportunities and methods to be developed, but we have noted that heavy pressure on the Commission's existing budget for grant-aided training means that some initiatives are turned down. The support available to assist organisations to develop in-house training is limited mainly to the voluntary sector, and here too demand tends to exceed the funds available. It is quite likely that with growing interest in training following the publication of our report, this pressure may increase. We suggest a number of areas where additional Commission help would be vital. The present lack of training expertise is a major constraint on improving the quality and quantity of training. Much more support is needed to train advisory staff and to produce new trainers from those working in countryside management. We place great store by training more countryside managers and helping organisations to employ specialist training staff, and additional support is needed to assist them in developing in-house training strategies and programmes. Consequently, we would expect the Countryside Commission itself to require some additional resources to deal adequately with increased activity in this area of work.

TRAINING AS A KEY TO THE FUTURE

- 9.12 Staff are an organisation's most important resource. With good training and development, they should be adaptable and innovative and able to help an organisation respond to

change, develop and grow. Friendly, helpful staff are vital in creating a good impression, improving understanding and creating a better awareness of the countryside. They can help motivate others to get involved as volunteers, or provide other assistance and services. A computer will never do this! In those posts with lower than average pay, training is important in sustaining staff morale and job satisfaction. Recent high levels of unemployment have tended to give less incentive to employers to provide good training. Now, with fewer school leavers entering the employment market and recruitment becoming more difficult, the value of staff resources – and the importance of training – is rising.

- 9.13 Those working in countryside conservation and recreation are well known for their dedication and commitment, but in our fast changing world where the inevitable march of 'progress' means ever-increasing pressures on the countryside, dedication is not enough. To care for our countryside over the years to come, employers, managers, staff and volunteers alike must be ready and able to make new policies work and respond to the challenge of change. They must be able to work with others, adopt new techniques, and seize every opportunity to make sure that our unique countryside is kept safe for the generations to come. In a nutshell, sympathetic and effective countryside conservation demands imaginative and responsible management, which in turn depends on high-quality training and trainers. Tomorrow's countryside lies in the hands of all who manage it today. Their training is the key to its future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

17. Bodies grant aiding countryside work and training should:

- a. make realistic resources available for the development of countryside staff training;
- b. link grant aid that has staffing implications to the adoption of the code of training practice appropriate to the grant-receiving body.

18. The Countryside Commission should:

- a. review its in-house expertise in the light of increased demand for guidance on countryside staff training;
- b. provide increased financial support to enable employers of countryside staff to:
 - develop staff training strategies and programmes;
 - encourage staff to participate in a range of external training opportunities;
- c. provide support to new training opportunities.



89

88



APPENDICES

1 TRAINING PROVISION – SOURCES AND METHODS

Below we list a number of ways, all of which, to a greater or lesser extent can contribute to training provision for countryside staff. None is self-contained and any effective training programme will need to take into account the respective contributions of each.

METHOD	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
1. PRE-SERVICE TRAINING		
Full-time courses	Intensive study Recognised status	Relevant subjects not always available
Full-time courses with sandwich period	Work experience helps job seeking Widens horizons	High costs require substantial funding or long-term release from work Work experience not always sufficiently long or demanding
Part-time courses (eg day, evening and block release)	Directly applicable for those in related employment	Relevant courses not always available
Previous work experience (eg as a volunteer, or permanent work in related and unrelated fields)	Some work skills are generally applicable Training may already have been undertaken	Value of work experience not always acknowledged. May have received poor training, or skills may be redundant
2. IN-HOUSE TRAINING (Provided or supported by employer)		
'Shadowing' (watching, working and learning alongside an experienced person)	Directly relevant Flexible use of time Emphasis on applying learning	Demonstrator will need expertise. May learn mistakes Time involvement of manager and instructor
Use of adviser/consultant (using a formal contact for help, advice and information)	Information directly relevant Reduces isolation within organisation	Dependent upon matching personalities Time involvement substantial
Training schemes (eg Employment Training, Youth Training Scheme)	Learning is directly applied Good experience for permanent job in organisation	Relevant courses or training not always available. In-house training expertise may be limited Low motivation if little chance of a permanent job.

METHOD	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Induction training (initial training, usually a pack and/or a course)	Good for initial impact and familiarisation	Must be good quality for good impression
Staff manual	Available when required Content relates to organisational priorities and system	Needs constant updating May be unrelated to new staff needs
Short-term experience in other departments or organisations	May improve relationships and co-operation Helps develop contacts with colleagues Increases understanding of organisation	Relevance not always understood
Site or study visits planned by job holder	Broadens experience of job holder Develops initiative and enquiry Relevant to individual's needs	Time necessary in planning, visits and follow up
In-house courses	Directly relevant Minimises costs of travel and staff time Promotes contact with colleagues	Presence of colleagues may inhibit progress Uses in-house training expertise May be limited in scope
Secondment and staff exchanges	Helps broaden experience Enables expertise to be shared with other organisations Helps improve contacts	Can be time consuming May not be directly relevant May be unsettling to some
3. OTHER EXTERNAL SOURCES		
Open learning (Correspondence courses, distance learning)	Enables learning at own pace and convenience Saves overheads	Lack of direct tutor contact No sharing of information or feedback
Short training courses	Enables good contacts to be made Intensive study of specialist subject	Fees and travel costs may be high Tuition quality variable
Conferences, seminars	Good form of up-dating Participative	Not always directly relevant May be expensive Training value not always maximised in programme
Full-time day and block-release courses	(see 1 above)	

METHOD

Organised group study
(usually abroad)

Travelling scholarship

Professional qualifications

ADVANTAGES

Helps widen experience

Improves professional contacts
and international information
networks

Demands considerable planning
and a follow-up report

Helps broaden experience

Helps career prospects in some
subjects

DISADVANTAGES

Possibly time consuming and
expensive

Training value not always
maximised in programme

Few scholarships available
Topics often tightly drawn

Countryside conservation and
recreation element not
emphasised.

2 A REVIEW OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COUNTRYSIDE STAFF

The following is a review of the principal opportunities for education and training in countryside management and closely related fields. It is by no means a definitive account but it illustrates the range and type of opportunities currently available and identifies areas of under and over provision. Our conclusions from this review are referred to in Chapters 3 and 4 and reflected in our recommendations.

FULL-TIME TRAINING PROVIDED BY THE FORMAL EDUCATION SECTOR

1. Full-time training can lead either to vocational or academic qualifications. Figure 30 shows the range of courses available. People without 'A' levels or an equivalent, wishing to take further training rather than a job, may study for a National Certificate (NC) or National Diploma (ND), with the option to progress to a Higher National Diploma (HND) or other higher qualification. A degree or a post-graduate qualification offers a more academic route and higher education establishments are broadening their entry requirements.

a. Vocational training

2. The main source of initial vocational training is the Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC) National Diploma (ND) (Two years full-time, three years with sandwich-period), and National Certificate (NC) (one year full-time), at colleges of further education, often agricultural colleges. Courses in agriculture, arboriculture, amenity horticulture, landscape conservation and leisure are well established, but only two NDs and one NC have a significant countryside management component. We feel that recently developed NCs in countryside skills and other certificates in woodland skills tend to be biased towards agricultural and forestry estate skills rather than the wider context of countryside management. The National Certificate in Countryside Conservation and Recreation at Otley College offers a broader approach. The NDs in leisure studies, on the other hand, offer countryside recreation or outdoor leadership as an option only and are too general in character to give a full appreciation of the knowledge and skills needed for work in the countryside sphere. The new ND in travel and tourism offers an option in heritage tourism.
3. Two NDs that aim specifically to train for ranger work (Countryside Recreation at Merrist Wood and Land Use and Recreation at the Northern Colleges) have been very successful in devising and teaching relevant syllabuses;

courses are regularly revised after consultation with employers, to meet changing needs. Work experience is also integrated, a feature that we welcome, with a year's pre-college experience not necessarily in agriculture, together with three terms of sandwich employment with a broad range of employers. Employers believe that these two specialised NDs meet their needs very well and that for a number of jobs, (particularly some ranger posts), the qualification is preferable to a higher one. However, job opportunities are limited at present and any new developments must take this into account. There is scope for adapting existing courses by developing options in countryside management, in amenity woodland management, and landscape and habitat survey and management. However, such developments must overcome the criticisms of existing courses, and take into account the key skills, core knowledge and other training needs set out in chapter 4.

HND AND DEGREE LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS

4. Training opportunities at HND level reveal a similar situation. The greatest number are in leisure studies but often only with options in countryside recreation. Many of the remaining more specialised courses have been established in the last two years, indicating an anticipated expansion in jobs in countryside management. HND holders have to compete with graduates for jobs and HND students from new courses may initially be at a disadvantage until the merit of these courses is established. New courses are justified partly on the basis of the number of vacancies advertised in professional journals. For example over a 21-month period up to October 1987, 488 jobs in countryside management and related areas were identified as suitable posts for which HND holders might apply¹. We have reservations about justifying new courses in this way – especially where several share the same basis of apparent demand.
5. A few HND courses such as Rural Resources and their Management at Seale-Hayne

College, are long established and successful. The BTEC system for regular revalidation helps to ensure they remain up to date and relevant to employers' needs. It is most important for new courses to involve employers and satisfy BTEC criteria but some are unlikely in their current form to produce graduates with the necessary breadth of experience and knowledge particularly in conservation and recreation management. Several newly developed ones are run by agricultural colleges aiming to diversify into countryside management. We are concerned that they may not have sufficient experience in these new areas and that this may be compounded by the involvement of inadequately retrained staff with insufficient specialist support. Some of the new syllabuses also retain a strong bias towards agricultural skills, many of which are not relevant to countryside staff. However, the HND approach is excellent in teaching practical skills, including those of management and communication, alongside technical and specialist knowledge in a broader context and this approach should be used more widely at other levels.

6. At degree level the number of training opportunities rises sharply, although almost half are in general environmental science or related studies, often of little direct relevance to countryside management work. However, these multi-disciplinary subjects provide a good initial education. Many countryside staff begin with a degree in geography or environmental science, adding on further qualifications and work experience. Planning courses also provide a broad training, although few deal adequately with countryside planning let alone countryside management. Specialisation in subjects such as ecology, landscape architecture, planning or environmental research only becomes possible at degree level. Since 1986² there has been a significant growth³ in ecology, environmental science, resource management and leisure and recreation courses.
7. Few degree courses cover countryside conservation and recreation or countryside management, and there are none in countryside

recreation management (although several include options), nor in environmental business management, a possible area for expansion. Discussions are underway for establishing a Degree in Environmental Interpretation. Land economy and estate management courses often lead to the professional qualification of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and may offer a direct path to countryside work. However, most such courses still concentrate on commercial estate management, and some reorientation is needed to include conservation and amenity management. In an attempt to fill these gaps, new degrees have been or are being set up. We are concerned that the content of some of these does not fully reflect the breadth and complexity of countryside issues and that the institutions do not have a sufficient number of staff with appropriate experience to teach the courses. Without some national agreement on content and terminology, course titles can be misleading.

8. Some of these difficulties arise from the lack of contact between universities and others awarding degrees, and poor links with likely graduate employers. Both over- and under-provision results and course content is not as relevant to the workplace as it should be. Employers at one of our workshops agreed that whilst the academic ability of graduates is high, too many cannot manage either themselves or other people nor can they communicate what they know. They made a plea for more 'user friendly' graduates! Many degree courses could be simply improved without a loss of standards, from modelling on HND practices, where key skills, including communication and management, are integral to a course, and work experience has a higher priority. Nevertheless, a degree is an advantage in applying for many jobs and some graduates obtain jobs for which they are over qualified. Because of the large number of courses, the supply of graduates generally exceeds the number of jobs currently available, although landscape architecture is a notable exception to this. There is little evidence to suggest that the number of full-time jobs is increasing sufficiently to absorb all graduates

wishing to work in conservation and recreation. For this reason we would not recommend setting up additional degrees in countryside related subjects. However, there is scope both for improving the content of existing specialist courses to include the areas identified in Chapter 4 and to reorientate some of the general courses to give a stronger countryside flavour.

9. Choice and opportunities to specialise increase at post-graduate level but, as with degrees, many post-graduate courses appear to have been developed with little reference to employers and the resulting qualifications may have limited practical application. Exceptions are in the field of landscape architecture, planning and those courses leading to professional qualifications whose standards have been set by practitioners. In 1960 the Nature Conservancy (now Nature Conservancy Council) set up an MSc in Conservation with University College London, to train conservation staff. The Post-graduate Certificate in Practical Nature Reserve Management is an interesting recent development offering graduates additional practical skills. Graduates have otherwise developed their practical countryside skills through short courses, voluntary work experience and, until 1988, work experience under the Community Programme. A few courses now available in highly specialised vocational areas such as environmental impact assessment, environmental forestry, heritage management and heritage interpretation, are welcome developments. We are unhappy that as yet there are no other full-time post-graduate courses in countryside management or countryside conservation. This could be remedied by diversifying existing courses – for example by including a countryside specialism in recreation management courses. New developments must overcome the criticisms of existing courses.

b. Work experience in related and unrelated fields

10. We have already stressed the value of work experience before and alongside full-time training. This is true of experience in related areas such

as agriculture or tourism and in unrelated sectors. Transferable skills related to communication, secretarial work, supervision and organisational management are increasingly valued by the environmental sector as their work expands and becomes more professional. Promotion, publicity, marketing, fundraising, business and financial management and counselling skills are in demand too. The experience of artists, historians and linguists can be invaluable in, for example, visitor services work. In each case further training builds on existing strengths and helps to produce staff with a more rounded experience. In today's much more volatile job market we consider the provision of supplementary training of this kind will become increasingly important. The value of work experience as well as qualifications should be recognised in recruiting and training staff.

c. In-service training and staff development

11. The extent to which staff can further skills, knowledge and professionalism related to their job depends very largely upon the employers' training policies. A study of employers in a range of sectors in 1988⁴ suggested that fewer than 1 in 3 had a training plan and even fewer had targets for training their staff. This state of affairs makes it very difficult to gather information about internal training practices. 'On-the-job' training is shown by the survey to be important, and substantial – comprising more than half of all training. We think that a similar situation exists amongst countryside employers – although here too records are rarely kept. Despite its importance, on-the-job training is too often unplanned, little recognised and undervalued. The following is a resumé of information gathered from case studies, workshops, our own enquiries and from relevant surveys.
12. Practices vary widely according to the size and type of organisation and the interest and commitment of staff to training. Figure 4 summarises the training provided by a selection of those with an active involvement in training. Information about in-house training is best documented for rangers and wardens: a survey

Figure 30

FULL-TIME QUALIFICATIONS IN SUBJECTS RELATED TO COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT

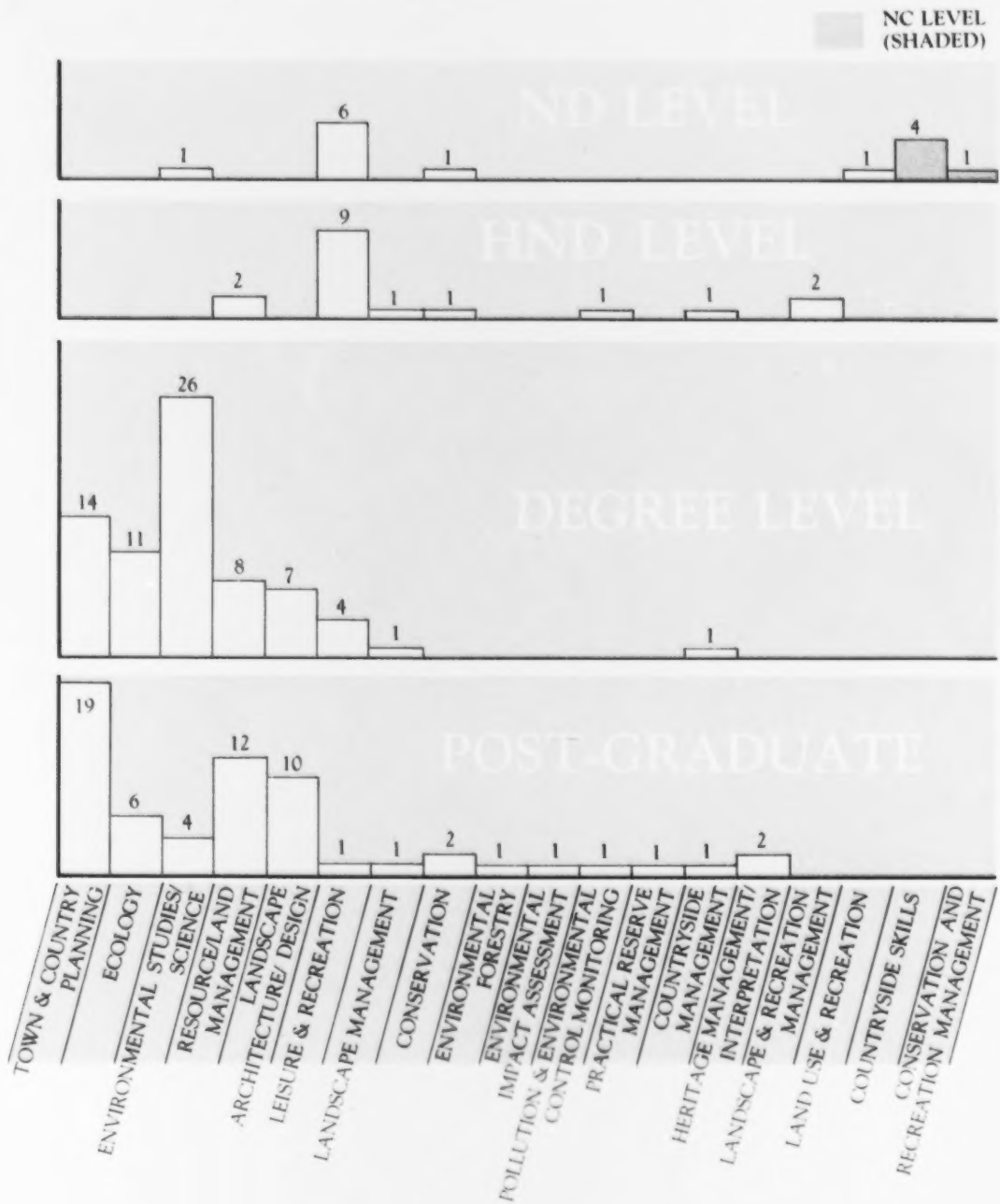


Figure 31
TRAINING FOR NATIONAL PARK STAFF

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF ANPO STAFF TRAINING WORKING PARTY

Types of staff	Number of staff	Current training and training needs
All staff	728	National parks generally take full advantage of training programmes offered by their parent authority, NPSA workshops for specialist groups and the annual induction course but there is an increasing demand for training to support particular responsibilities.
Senior management	30	Insufficient management training, with the assumption that once at this level, an officer has either already received such training or will develop managerial skills by experience.
Planning	112	Better served than most, with use of RTP1 training opportunities and annual NPSA development control workshops. A need for time management and other managerial skills, planning practice and law and new technology.
Information and interpretation	124	Although internal training courses sometimes available, few needs identified are presently catered for eg management training, interpretive planning, merchandising, interpersonal skills for field information assistants and guides, new techniques in interpretation.
Conservation management	49	General areas of need; updated professional knowledge, management training, new technology, and negotiating skills. In some cases training is available but staff unaware of it or unable to attend.
Recreation management, rangers and field staff	200	Training opportunities for rangers are generally better than for most staff through the use of internal and ACR courses. Training events for their broader role in the community, and as facilitators is inadequate.
Administration	213	Many of the skills needed are covered by the training programmes offered by local authorities. Clerical planning staff identified as a specific target group. A general need for training in management and new technology.

of ACR members in 1983 indicated that 61% had received some internal training in the previous three years, and although almost three-quarters attended external courses most of this was in practical skills. Well under half received training in public relations and only a quarter undertook management training.

PRACTICES WITHIN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

13. Government organisations such as the Countryside Commission and Nature Conservancy Council have specialist in-house training officers to advise on, coordinate and organise

training development. They are guided by Civil Service training and career development practices, have their own training policies and identify their own needs. Their training budgets amount to between 3% and 4% of their staff budgets. They organise short courses in-house and make use of a range of external training opportunities. The Countryside Commission provides training on induction, internal procedures, staff development in major policy areas, supports secondments and study visits and uses its own programme of sponsored training courses together with other external sources for training within this system. The NCC, with its larger staff, supports an impressive range of internal courses including management skills, public relations and specific scientific training in such fields as environmental assessment. An annual staff training handbook details the policy and courses available. Yet despite this degree of sophistication – more than in many organisations – some staff still feel that training provision is inadequate.

TRAINING FOR NATIONAL PARK STAFF

14. The ten national parks and the Broads Authority together employ over 700 staff in a broad range of jobs. Until recently each trained its staff independently except for a few joint conferences, workshops and induction courses organised by the National Park Staff Association (NPSA) in conjunction with the Association of National Park Officers (ANPO) and training providers within the parks. In 1988, ANPO set up a Staff Training Working Party to advise them on the resources needed for training and to recommend a policy. The findings showed considerable variation in approaches to training from park to park. For example, training budgets were often inadequate and only three parks used a system of appraisal to identify their training needs. Figure 31 summarises their assessment of the training for the main groups of national park staff. The ANPO study demonstrates how training needs can be assessed to enable movement towards a structured programme which matches the future needs of staff with both the resources

available and national park objectives. The needs of volunteer staff and committee members were outside its remit but separately with the Countryside Commission, the parks have set up a new system of initial training and updating for national park members.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

15. In-service training provision by local authorities is similarly varied. Countryside recreation or management departments are often small or only a few countryside staff work within a larger department having wider responsibilities. Most county councils offer training in common skills such as communication, staff management and supervision and information technology and are able to advise on external sources. Because in-house personnel and training staff rarely have knowledge of specialist countryside management training, it often falls to line managers or staff themselves to suggest and seek suitable training for their own needs. Many local authorities make good use of Countryside Commission sponsored courses and other outside practical skills training. Yet few seem to have well thought through training policies and budgets for training countryside staff or follow a training appraisal system. We feel that there is much potential for local authorities to adopt a more structured approach for assessing needs and delivering training for countryside staff.
16. The larger countryside departments of county councils are more able to organise in-house training for countryside staff. Before the Community Programme (CP) ended many local authorities ran work experience schemes – some of which included internal training courses. Only a few have so far developed programmes under Employment Training (ET). Training under the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) is offered by a number of authorities normally in conjunction with YTS courses in agricultural or countryside skills offered by local agricultural colleges. Some authorities support trainee posts, often through sandwich placements for students from National Diploma or Higher National Diploma courses. Nearly 70%

of placements from one National Diploma in Countryside Recreation course were with local authorities, mostly county councils. Whilst a few authorities provide training for volunteers – mainly for voluntary wardens – training for elected council members is either non-existent or rudimentary. Regrettably, we have to conclude that there are still many local authorities for whom in-house training to assist countryside staff continues to be haphazard or absent and whose budgets are very limited.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

17. Voluntary organisations also show considerable variations in their training provision. Large organisations such as the BTCV, the National Trust, RSPB and the Groundwork Foundation (Figure 4), employ training co-ordinators and provide regular in-house training for staff or use outside sources. BTCV for example, organises a number of national training courses each year together with well attended regional training events for its staff and volunteers. Many of these are financially assisted by countryside bodies such as the NCC and the Countryside Commission. Smaller voluntary organisations, less able to employ training staff, tend to recruit trained professionals who must then learn on-the-job and use their own initiative to find further training or take advantage of external courses. Some are now developing their own training policies. Until recently, a number of the county trusts for nature conservation and other voluntary bodies were able to employ training coordinators under CP but with the advent of ET, this is no longer the case for the majority. Organisations relying heavily on volunteers have, not unexpectedly, pioneered training for volunteers. For example, The National Trust, run training for their ACORN camp leaders: BTCV have courses for volunteer leaders and practical skills, the RSNC co-ordinated WATCH organisation run leaders' training courses. We believe that training policies and practices involving voluntary bodies and particularly volunteers – both to promote their greater effectiveness and encour-

age greater professionalism in using voluntary effort, need to be better.

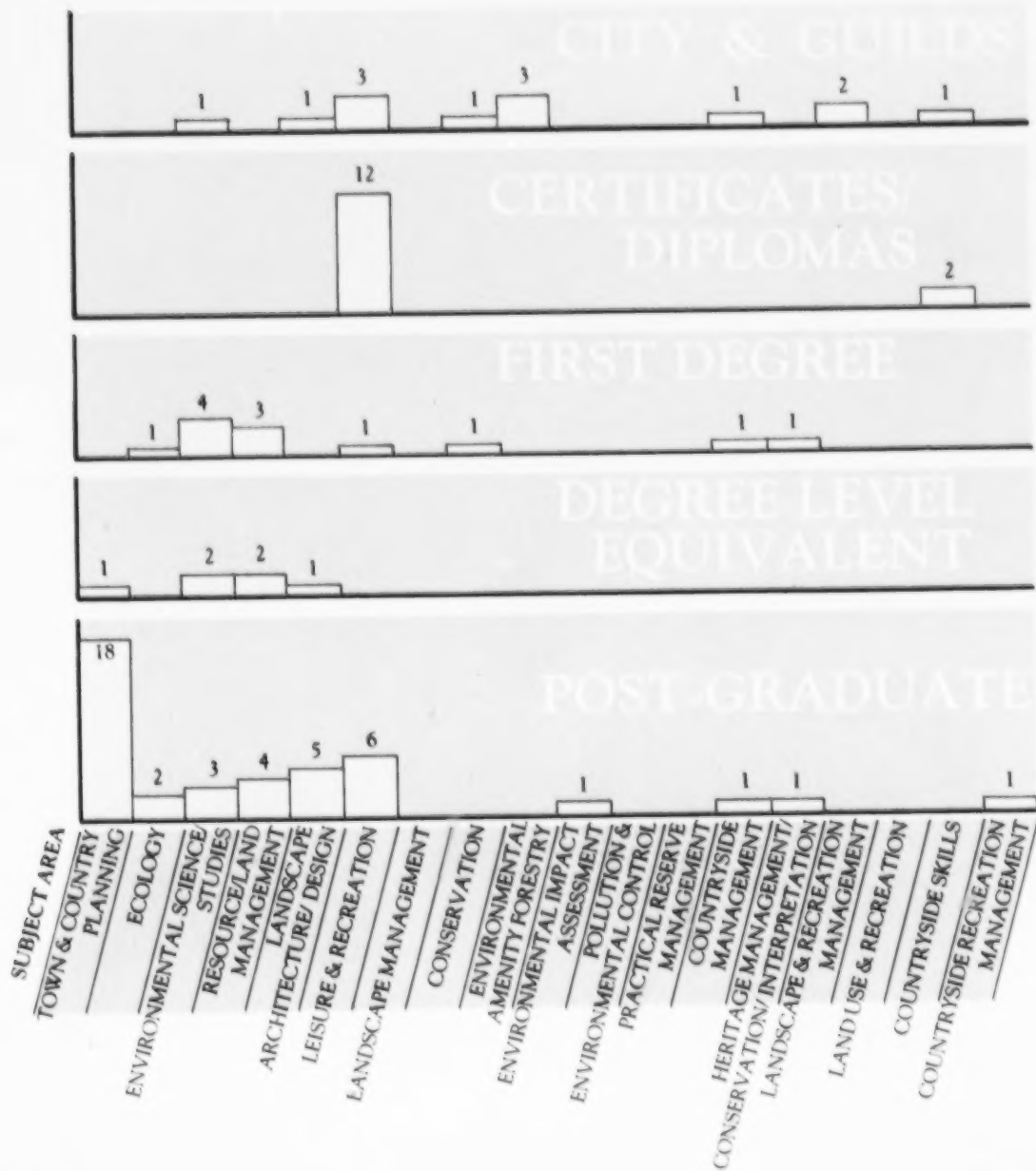
d. Other external training sources

18. Employers and countryside staff make considerable use of external training sources, especially short courses but also part-time courses, conferences, study visits and open learning. External short courses are sometimes the only means of in-service training and in the absence of support from employers some staff have to pay for themselves to attend. We believe that external short courses should be used in a more planned way as part of an in-service training programme. Other methods, such as study visits, open learning and secondments, must play a bigger role. Location is a key factor governing access to some forms of external training and in rural areas with little public transport and long distances to travel, this should be taken into account in developing training programmes and selecting methods.

PART-TIME TRAINING: COURSES RUN BY UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

19. Opportunities for part-time study leading to qualifications in conservation and recreation management are very limited. Figure 32 shows the possibilities at four levels. At the practical level, there are courses linked to the YTS, usually with an opportunity to take National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC) certificates in rural skills. These have been developed mostly by agricultural and horticultural colleges and only the YTS in Countryside Conservation managed by Owlfern Limited offers, in our view, an adequate background to, and practice in countryside management. To date there have been few YTS countryside management trainees but there may be greater opportunities in future and any courses must take into account the need for key skills and core knowledge identified in our report. The City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI) courses enable trainees to attend day and block release training run by further education (FE) providers. Again there are many courses for established sectors such as agriculture, horticul-

Figure 32
PART-TIME QUALIFICATIONS IN SUBJECTS
RELATED TO COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT



ture and forestry but little of interest in the countryside conservation and recreation field. Training providers can devise their own schemes for approval by CGLI giving rise to marked differences in content. However, few are on offer and so there is little opportunity to progress through the four phases of the qualification whilst specialising in the countryside. A sequential part-time route from CGLI Phase I to Phase IV spread over four to five years is needed but, it must be developed within the NCVQ framework in consultation with COSQUEC. Its availability would depend upon demand from students and the support of their employers or organisations but we believe it is worth creating and supporting. Our view is that there is now scope for expanding practical work in the countryside but there are real difficulties in providing the funding necessary to support jobs and training in practical skills. If the notion of a Countryside Task Force proposed by the Countryside Commission⁵ gains favour, then we believe it could provide a stimulus for more training opportunities – to NCVQ standards – in this field.

There are opportunities to take part-time courses at intermediate level in general leisure and recreation management (BTEC Certificate in Management studies), but only the BTEC Continuing Education Certificate option in Countryside Recreation gives in our estimation, an adequate emphasis on countryside topics. A few part-time certificates and diplomas are offered at a higher level by some universities (particularly by extra-mural and continuing education departments) and some polytechnics. The subjects are very varied; ecology and conservation, environmental management and landscape interpretation are examples. Evening and weekend study enables those at work to take part. But with only a dozen or so courses, mostly in or around London, access for other parts of the country is poor. We applaud the University of London Centre for Extra-Mural Studies who have set up a two-year Diploma in Countryside Management following discussions with the principle

countryside agencies. The course (Figure 33) aims at providing in-service training for practising countryside managers. We advocate more courses of this kind in other parts of the country, preferably linked together. This would provide a useful source of intermediate qualifications and a stepping stone to further study and training. The same would apply to part-time degree level courses. These are available only at six locations, generally in the southern half of England and in a limited range of subjects: environmental studies, planning, estate management, rural resource management and landscape architecture. Again we think there is a lot of scope for expanding opportunities like these in other areas, but they must be relevant to the needs of trainees and to employers, who are a large potential source of customers and support.

Figure 33

PART-TIME DIPLOMA IN COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT

Department of Extra Mural Studies
University of London, Wye and Birkbeck Colleges

Syllabus summary:

Land use history, agriculture and countryside policy

Landscape, habitat and species conservation

Survey, evaluation and monitoring

Legal and administrative contexts for the countryside

Organisation and management – staff and people

Environmental education and interpretation

Six two-day meetings (including Saturday) and a one week residential course each year. Award by examination, course work and dissertation.

21. There are many more part-time opportunities at post-graduate level, although the countryside management element of most courses is minimal and the availability of subjects varies greatly from area to area. Only town and country planning courses are well distributed around the country largely because in-service training leading to RTPI qualifications is a well-established aspect of training departments and practices. As managers of countryside staff

come to recognise the value of more and better training, part-time countryside management courses too could play a much bigger in-service role.

22. The success of the mid-career Diploma/MSc in Countryside Management at Manchester Polytechnic (see Figure 34) supports this view. There is a demand for training which not only helps to develop expertise but also improves career prospects. New Diplomas or Masters courses are offered in Countryside Recreation (Sheffield Polytechnic) and in Heritage Management (Ironbridge Institute), the latter can

also be studied in modules. Now that management skills are seen to be important, some countryside staff study for the part-time Diploma in Management Studies, although few courses specialise in leisure and recreation, and none at all in countryside recreation. The development of further part-time courses, or perhaps the use of modules of existing full-time ones, leading to qualifications, would provide much needed additional opportunities to support in-service training. However, initiatives must have the full involvement of employers to be successful.

Figure 34

**MANCHESTER POLYTECHNIC
PART-TIME POST-GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT**

Background

Established in 1984 (being revised and updated in 1989) the two year course has four academic themes:

- Physical basis of the countryside
- Ecological basis of the countryside
- Interpretation
- Management Techniques and Practice

Modular Programme*

Year 1

Introduction
Coastal Systems
Wetlands
Grasslands and lowland agriculture systems
Woodlands
Heaths and uplands
Interpretation
Urban fringe
Resource project

Year 2

Management for people and educational interpretation
Management implementation
Management plan project
Examination

Study

Course runs from January each year. Six hours contact every Wednesday in term time plus residential field trips and project work. The course may be studied over a period of up to four years through credit accumulation of passed modules. Students interested in studying individual modules may register as associate students.

Assessment

By course work, (practicals, field reports resource projects, management plan report, seminar papers), and written examinations.

*Subject to approval in 1989.

Part-time MSc in Countryside Management

A one year course established in 1986. Students who achieve a high grade at Postgraduate Diploma level may apply for the one year research MSc examined by dissertation and conference presentation.

Figure 35

COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF SPONSORED NATIONAL COURSES

1. Proven experience of professional training for countryside staff with positive feedback from users.
 2. An understanding of national policies and developments in the training subject area and of the needs and expectations of the target audience.
 3. A number of staff with experience and skills in direct training, in course coordination and in the subjects of the course. Evidence of staff development is expected in these areas.
 4. An effective system for course administration, publicity and finance.
 5. Appropriate accommodation and teaching facilities at a reasonable cost.
 6. Good links with local conservation organisations and potential course contributors.
 7. Local case studies and training exercises which illustrate good practice of the philosophy, policies and methods which the Commission wish to promote.
 8. Effective systems for evaluation and for updating training courses.
-

SHORT EXTERNAL TRAINING COURSES

23. Short courses, particularly residential ones, have proved very popular with countryside staff and employers alike. In the absence of in-house training this may be the only form of training which some staff receive. Consequently, some events are over-subscribed and there are calls for more courses especially at local level. Although many residential courses are subsidised they can be expensive which may discourage attendance if budgets are poor or if staff and volunteers have to pay for themselves. Lower cost, one-day courses, which are more locally accessible are increasing as a result. The Countryside Commission is a major sponsor of short courses. In 1989-90, 37 courses offering 860 places were offered at ten different centres. These provided 100 places for basic ranger training and courses in landscape conservation, communication, interpretation, and countryside recreation. There is criticism that the courses are not sufficiently well spread geographically but they are well subscribed by virtue

of the general high quality which the experienced providers offer. Customers seek high quality trainers with proven experience in professional training and in the subjects being taught. To ensure these standards are maintained the Countryside Commission use the criteria set out in Figure 35.

24. As countryside staff develop their knowledge and skills they are demanding higher quality training. The Commission monitors the quality of its sponsored courses, is aware of concerns about geographical spread and is attempting to widen the basis of the programme. However, there is evidence of a shortage of training providers who can meet the standards required. The courses are designed to be part of an employer's in-service training programme. Criticism that there are insufficient sponsored national courses arises largely from the lack of alternative training provided by employers and the erroneous view that 'training equals courses'. We believe that many employers have relied too heavily on these national courses.

Cooperation with other employers and more local training providers would improve local provision and so help to give more training providers experience in countryside staff training and encourage a wider distribution of opportunities.

25. There are numerous additional providers of short courses many of whom are listed in the Countryside Commission's Directory¹. We feel that many people are not sufficiently aware of these and especially of training offered locally, sometimes in related sectors such as agriculture, tourism and commercial management. Availability of countryside conservation and recreation training courses varies markedly from region to region but several organisations are developing programmes at a range of locations. For example, six government agencies collaborate in the Interpretive Training Consortium coordinated by the Centre for Environmental Interpretation. The Association of Countryside Rangers (ACR) and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) offer training in management and organisational skills, communication and technical training such as habitat management. Each BTCV region offers practical skills training for staff and volunteers and they and a number of others provide training in how to work with volunteers.
26. There are now some low-cost courses in managerial skills, but many are oversubscribed and much of the training expertise in this field remains within the commercial sector. These are usually aimed at middle and senior managers and are considered prohibitively expensive by many countryside organisations, although in practice they could prove a sound investment. A number of short course training providers supply training on a contract basis. Some other voluntary conservation and training organisations present more specialised or occasional countryside training courses. Also emerging are a number of training providers in the formal education and independent sector seizing opportunities in the diversification of countryside interests and skills. Few short courses are validated and with evidence of a scarcity of suitably experienced trainers and poor staff

development, there is concern about the quality of some of these developments. However, there is scope for the further development of low cost training courses, particularly at regional level in a range of countryside management topics and some of these might in time be linked into the national system for qualifications.

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

27. Conferences and seminars provide professional contacts and up-to-date information and can be a valuable form of training although usually are not designed to maximise this aspect. Contributing at conferences, although rarely recognised as training can be an effective way of giving extra responsibility, increasing motivation and developing communication skills. A wide range of training providers, professional institutes, associations and countryside organisations organise conferences, usually in response to national policy developments or issues or to advance current thinking and practice. Usually conferences are attended by more senior staff but we believe their training value should be recognised more widely, with opportunities arranged at the technical staff level, such as the European Ranger Training Seminar organised each year by the Peak National Park Centre and the ACR. Organisers and employers can help to promote conferences and seminars as training – both nationally and internationally – by defining clearer objectives and designing better structured programmes.

OPEN LEARNING

28. Open learning (also called distance learning or correspondence courses) would seem to have much to offer for pre- and in-service training because it overcomes problems of isolation and is accessible to everyone with radio, TV or video. But there are few opportunities at present, and these are not widely used. The directory² lists the main ones. There are a number of reasons for this. Open learning is expensive to develop and without sizeable subsidies, courses seem expensive and most of what is available

does not lead to recognised qualifications. Professional contacts, which are important for isolated staff, cannot be made unless counselling seminars, meetings or residential courses are part of the package. In addition, for countryside staff already working long and unsocial hours, finding time for self study can be very difficult. Open learning should be used much more as part of employers' in-service training programmes and as preparatory and follow-up work to more formal courses. The development of new units and validation should be encouraged.

STUDY VISITS, WORK EXCHANGES AND SECONDMENTS

29. Individual and group study visits are a good way to encourage staff development particularly in jobs with limited career prospects. They enable staff to widen horizons, take initiatives and look at new ideas but at present they are little used. Some professional associations and local authorities organise one-day site visits for members. Winston Churchill Fellowships, Leverhulme and Nuffield Awards and British Council grants for professional visits, offer chances for individuals to learn from other countries. Group study visits are occasionally organised, for example, for many years the US National Parks Service have provided travelling seminars for countryside staff from all over the world, these now take particular themes. Other developments taking place such as the links between the Countryside Commission and the Danish Ministry of the Environment are increasing the level of contact. We welcome these initiatives and hope that it will be possible to widen considerably the opportunities for staff at all levels, in similar occupations to undertake both exchange visits and exchange working arrangements. Work exchanges and secondments are an under-used training opportunity, enabling new staff to work alongside experienced workers elsewhere or enabling reciprocal exchanges of more experienced staff. These are usually organised in-house but can benefit from the help and advice from outside organisations. For example, the European Federation of Nature and National Parks coordinates an exchange scheme for staff working within parks in Europe.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE THE UK

30. Training in Britain cannot be viewed in isolation, particularly as some of our practices are based on approaches from abroad, especially the USA. For example, the US National Parks Service, which employs thousands of staff, has a long-established system of in-service training including two national training centres and a system of regional coordinators. Many colleges there offer qualifications in aspects of resource management, such as heritage interpretation. Other countries with well-developed National Park Services support similar in-service programmes and work with colleges to develop suitable qualifications including, in Australia, a distance learning qualification for national park staff in remote locations.
31. Because fewer people are employed professionally in countryside conservation and recreation, developments in Europe are, on the whole, less advanced. At present specialised qualifications are rare, although in Italy they are a pre-requisite to the employment of some rangers. Initial qualifications tend to be in subjects such as geography, biology, landscape architecture or land management disciplines like forestry. These are followed up by work experience, conferences and sometimes study visits. Larger conservation organisations have been able to develop in-service training, mostly for specific groups of staff, especially rangers and wardens. The French National Parks use a central training unit the 'Cellule Inter-Parks' to run a short course training programme.
32. The importance of training is beginning to be recognised in Europe and it is an integral part of the new ranger service set up by the Danish Ministry of the Environment. A number of UK organisations such as BTCV, the Countryside Commission, the Countryside Commission for Scotland and the Groundwork Foundation have advised European organisations in developing training. With the advent of the single market in 1992 and the development of equivalent qualifications across Europe, there is great scope for further collaborative work to improve pre-service and in-service countryside training on a European scale and we would encourage such initiatives.

3 SOME KEY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. PUBLISHED DIRECTORIES

- **Countryside Education and Training Directory** – CCP260 Countryside Commission 1989
- **Directory of Vocational Qualifications for the Environment** – UK2000 1988
- **Courses in Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry** – National Consultative Committee for Agricultural Education 1989/90
- **Time to Learn** – National Institute of Adult Continuing Education 1989
- **Council for National Academic Awards. Handbook CNAA** 1989

2. COMPUTER DATABASES

a. GENERAL

- **ECCTIS** (Educational Counselling and Credit and Transfer Information Service)
Access through Prestel or write to ECCTIS, PO Box 88, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6DB
- **MARISNET** (Materials and Resources Information Service Network)
- **PICKUP** (Professional and Industrial Commercial Updating)
Access to MARISNET AND PICKUP is through **Training Access Points**, computer terminals located in some Job Centres and public libraries. The information is also available through Prestel the education database.

b. COUNTRYSIDE STAFF TRAINING

- **Rural Training Opportunities** – educational and training opportunities for those living and working in the countryside (including agriculture and related industries and rural businesses). Access through Training Access Points or a 'viewdata' subscription to MARISNET. Contact Jeremy Grosse, East Close, Ditchcat, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 6PS.
- **Countryside Commission Countryside Training Database** – feasibility study underway.
This database is still being developed, information from Countryside Commission, Training and Voluntary Action Branch.

3. ANNUAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES

- **Training for Countryside Staff and Volunteers** Countryside Commission CCP 228
- **Information Leaflets** (available directly from training providers including BTCV, CEI, ACR, Capel Manor, Volunteer Centre (UK), Field Studies Council, ILAM, etc). Peak National Park Centre. Addresses available from the Countryside Commission's Countryside Education and Training Directory (see above).

4 TRAINING FOR TRAINERS

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COUNTRYSIDE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

SUBJECT	TRAINING PROVIDER	TARGET AUDIENCE		
		MANAGERS	OCCASIONAL TRAINERS	SPECIALIST TRAINERS/INSTRUCTORS
Countryside Commission sponsored courses				
Senior Ranger Training (part of course only)	Losehill Hall	•		
Management Skills for Countryside Recreation (part of course only)	Losehill Hall	•	•	
Managing for Managers (part of course only)	Capel Manor	•		
Leadership Skills (part of course only)	Capel Manor	•		
Training for Trainers	Capel Manor	•	•	
Techniques for Trainers	BTCV		•	•
Instructional Techniques	BTCV		•	•
Trainers Workshop	BTCV			•
Leadership skills	BTCV		•	
Leadership skills for WATCH leaders	WATCH		•	
Leadership skills for ACORN camp leaders	National Trust		•	
NCC courses				
Introduction to training techniques (NCC staff only)		•	•	
Other				
Helping others learn	ACRE		•	
Participative training techniques	Agricultural Training Board (ATB)			•
Showing People How	ATB		•	
Giving Talks	ATB	•	•	
Instructional Techniques In-Company	ATB	•	•	•
Advanced Training Techniques	BTCV		•	
Range of Courses for Instructors in forestry skills	Forestry Training Council		•	•
Training for Trainers	NCVO		•	•
Training the Trainers	Volunteer Centre UK		•	•

5 GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THIS REPORT

Academic qualifications. Qualifications awarded at school, college, polytechnic or university, based on an individual's ability to learn theoretical concepts and absorb written information, as opposed to practical skills.

Aims. A statement of general intent or purpose. Training course publicity should contain a clear statement of the aims of the event to enable prospective participants to evaluate its relevance eg 'The event aims to provide participants with the skills and knowledge to involve young people in countryside activities'.

Access (to training). Admission to training, either to a course or other forms of learning opportunities. Training may be available but inaccessible to an individual due to the location of the training event, prohibitive cost, specific entry requirements etc.

Assessment. Procedures for determining an individual's potential to do a job, or the extent to which an individual has reached a level of skill, knowledge, understanding or attitude. May involve an interview, written or practical test.

Basic skills. Those skills essential to allow a job to be carried out and to enable progression to further training or more advanced work.

Countryside management. The management of the whole countryside, which accommodates a multiplicity of uses including conservation and recreation interests.

Certification. The process of assessing, recording, and issuing and validating a certificate.

Certificated training. Training that will lead to the trainee receiving a certificate stating he/she has attained a specified level of competence.

Competence. The ability to perform a particular activity to a prescribed standard.

Countryside staff. People working in a variety of roles for a wide range of organisations whose work is concerned primarily with landscape and nature conservation, informal recreation and public access in the countryside. May be paid or voluntary workers.

Curriculum. An underlying framework that gives guidance for the design of learning opportunities.

Distance learning. Any form of learning where the tutors and students are not in the same place. Assignments are completed by the students at their own pace. Tutorial back-up by telephone or in person may be built-in.

Education. Academic instruction that emphasises the acquisition of knowledge.

Informal countryside recreation. Activities carried out for enjoyment in the countryside such as picnics, short and long walks, cycling, horseriding, pleasure driving.

In-house training. Organised opportunities for learning held within the employing organisation.

Initial training. Training that is experienced before the individual takes up employment (sometimes called pre-service training).

In-service training. Training opportunities provided for people already in employment.

Interpersonal skills. The skills that enable people to communicate with and relate to each other. Sometimes referred to as 'social skills'.

Interpretation (countryside interpretation). A process of explaining the features of the countryside to people to help them understand and learn about it. Can involve a number of methods including guided walks, nature trails, displays, exhibitions, video, theatre, art, etc.

Induction training. Training given to a new employee to familiarise him or her with a new job, employing organisation, health and safety procedures, systems to be followed etc.

Instructor. Someone who teaches and demonstrates a specific skill to others.

Job remit. A detailed statement of the activities involved in a job.

Modules. Separate and self-standing parts of a training or educational programme designed to lead to a certain level of qualification or attainment.

National Vocational Qualification (NVQ). A qualification accredited by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications and incorporated into the NVQ framework.

Objective (*learning or training objective*). The specific knowledge, skills and attitudes that a trainee will achieve at the end of a period of training.

Open learning. Similar to distance learning, it enables people to learn at the time, place and pace which satisfies their circumstances and requirements. It aims to overcome barriers to learning that result from geographical isolation, personal or work commitments or conventional course structures.

Organisational skills. The skills required to plan for and organise oneself and others, for example, time management, prioritising, work programming, planning.

On-the-job training. Learning that takes place while actually working, eg by working with a more experienced and competent worker or learning under guided instruction.

Professional institute. A nationally recognised body, which seeks to represent individuals and organisations working in a defined occupational area. An institute usually has specific membership requirements, a clear identity, objectives, values and a code of conduct.

Training. A process by which people can be helped to develop their skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them to do their jobs effectively, to adapt to new priorities and take on additional responsibilities or promotion.

Training needs. Specific skills and knowledge that an individual requires to do his/her work but does not yet possess.

Training needs analysis. The identification of an individual's training needs through a systematic examination of the component parts of a job, and the skills and knowledge required to do that job.

Training audit. A systematic review of training needs within an organisation.

Trainer. Someone who may use a variety of techniques to ensure that learning takes place and is an enjoyable experience.

Professional qualifications. A statement of competence issued by a professional institute (*see above*) recognising that an individual has attained a prescribed standard of skills and knowledge related to employment in a specific occupation.

Skill. Practiced or expert mental or physical activity. For example, practical conservation skills include tree planting, fencing, wall building etc.

Sandwich course. A course of training that involves academic directed training either side of a period of practical work experience. Usually three or four years long.

Syllabus. A structured programme of topics and subjects to be studied as part of an academic course.

Training provider. An organisation or individual who supplies training in any form.

Training event. An occurrence that has been organised to facilitate the development of knowledge, skills or attitudes. May be a short course, long residential course, lecture, workshop or seminar which has specific learning objectives.

Training programme. A planned series of training events over a period of time devised for an individual or a group of staff with similar training needs.

Unit of competence. (In NCVQ terms) an initial sub-division of the competence needed to be achieved for the award of an NVQ.

Vocational qualification (VQ). A qualification based upon a statement of competence related to skills required in employment.

Workshop. An event where a number of individuals with a common interest meet to discuss a topic in detail, working to achieve clear objectives and put forward positive solutions and suggestions for further action. A workshop is highly participative, flexible and informal.

Working group. A group of individuals who are each involved in carrying out a specific task (*research, consultation, organisation*) and then reporting back to a main committee.

Work based assessment. Appraisal of an individual's ability to apply skills in their work. Assessment is carried out in the workplace by a supervisor or suitable assessor and may involve practical tests or continuous evaluation of achievements.

6 REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 2

1. These changes have been well studied and documented. See, for example,

Blunden, J and Curry, N.
A Future for our Countryside
Blackwell 1988

Blacksell, M and Gilg A.
The Countryside, Planning and Change
Allen and Unwin 1981

Open University
The Changing Countryside
Croom Helm 1985
2. **Employment for the 1990s**
CMND 540, HMSO 1988

Training for Employment
CMND 316, HMSO 1988
3. Further details from the National Council
for Vocational Qualifications,
222 Euston Road, London NW1 2BZ
4. Further details from TEC Project Team,
The Training Agency,
Moorfoot, Sheffield S1 4PQ
5. Cherry, G.
Rural Planning Problems
Leonard Hill 1976
6. Countryside Commission
New Opportunities for the Countryside
CCP 224, 1987
7. **Census 1981**
Office of Population, Censuses and Surveys
8. **Action for Rural Enterprise**
Development Commission 1987
9. **The Lake District Upland Management
Experiment**
Countryside Commission
CCP 93, 1976

CHAPTER 3

1. Coopers and Lybrand Associates
**A challenge to complacency – changing
attitudes to training**
Manpower Services Commission, 1985
2. **Employment for the 1990s**
CMND 540, HMSO 1988
3. Countryside Commission
**Countryside Education and Training
Directory**
CCP 260, 1989
4. **Working for the countryside – A
statement to mark the conclusion of the
community programme**
Countryside Commission. Position
statement
March 1989

CHAPTER 4

1. 'Conservation in Action'
Programme of BTCV Central Training Unit
events 1989-90

CHAPTER 5

1. Deloitte, Haskins and Sells
**The Funding of Vocational Education and
Training**
Manpower Services Commission 1987
2. Cabinet Office
**Non-industrial Civil Service Training
Costs and Statistics**
1979/80-1986/7
3. Centre for Environmental Interpretation
**An Evaluation study of countryside
training courses**
Initial report to the Countryside Commission
1989
4. Museums and Galleries Commission
**Museum Professional Training and Career
Structure**
Report by a working party, HMSO 1987

5. Recreation Management Training Committee (Yates Committee)
Final report to the Department of Environment
HMSO 1984

CHAPTER 7

1. For further details of membership, publications and the **Trainers Code of Good Practice contact**
The Institute for Training and Development, Marlow House, Institute Road, Marlow, Bucks SL7 1BN
2. A useful guide for occasional trainers is Rae, L.
The Skills of Training
Gower 1983
3. A number of texts deal with the role of the manager as a trainer. In particular see:

Boydell, T.
A guide to the identification of training needs
BACIE 1976

Local Government Training Board.
A practical guide to effective coaching
LGTB 1986

Rae, L.
The skills of human relations training
Gower 1985

Pepper, A D.
Managing the training and development function
Gower 1984
4. Yorkshire Water Authority
In managing learning
Nixon, K. & Hemmingway J.
HMSO 1987

CHAPTER 8

1. Ecotec
Training in the environmental field
Report to the European Commission (forthcoming 1989).

CHAPTER 9

1. **Paying for Training**
A comprehensive guide to sources of finance for adult training
Planning Exchange, Glasgow 1988
2. Coopers and Lybrand Associates
A challenge to complacency – changing attitudes to training
Manpower Services Commission, 1985

APPENDIX 2

1. Lancashire College of Agriculture
HND submission to BTEC 1988
2. Countryside Commission
Directory of training opportunities in countryside conservation and recreation
CCP 138, 1986/7
3. Countryside Commission
Countryside Education and Training Directory
CCP 260, 1989
4. Training Agency
The Funding of Vocational Education and Training – some early research findings
Background Note No 2 1988
5. Working for the countryside
A statement to mark the conclusion of the community programme
Countryside Commission. Position statement March 1989

7 ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN WORKSHOPS AND CONSULTATIONS

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Barnsley MBC
Cheshire CC
Clwyd CC
Doncaster MBC
Essex CC
Hertfordshire CC
Hampshire CC
Humberside CC
Isle of Wight CC
Herefordshire CC
East Sussex CC
Suffolk CC
Tameside BC
Wakefield MBC

NATIONAL PARKS

Dartmoor
Brecon Beacons
North York Moors
Peak District

EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS AND CONSULTANTS

Agricultural Training Board
Askham Bryan College of Agriculture
and Horticulture
Capel Manor Horticultural and
Environmental centre
Centre for Environmental Interpretation
Dudley Polytechnic
Field Studies Council
Framework
Forestry Training Council
First Interpreters
Local Government Training Board
Merrist Wood Agricultural College
Manchester Polytechnic
Manchester University
The Open University

Sheffield Polytechnic
Southampton College of Higher Education
Salford University

VOLUNTARY BODIES

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
Council for the Protection of Rural England
Farming and Wildlife Trust
Groundwork Foundation
Kent Trust for Nature Conservation
Lancashire Trust for Nature Conservation
Rossendale Groundwork Trust
St Helens and Knowsley Groundwork Trust
Oldham and Rochdale Groundwork Trust
The National Trust
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
National Council for Voluntary Organisations
The Volunteer Centre UK

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS

Countryside Commission
Nature Conservancy Council
Forestry Commission
Countryside Commission for Scotland
Training Agency
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTES AND STAFF ASSOCIATIONS

Association of Countryside Rangers
Association of National Parks and Countryside
Voluntary Wardens
Working Panel of Local Authority Ecologists
Royal Town Planning Institute
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Institute of Leisure and Amenity Managers
Landscape Institute
Institute of Training and Development

8 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNTRYSIDE STAFF TRAINING ADVISORY GROUP

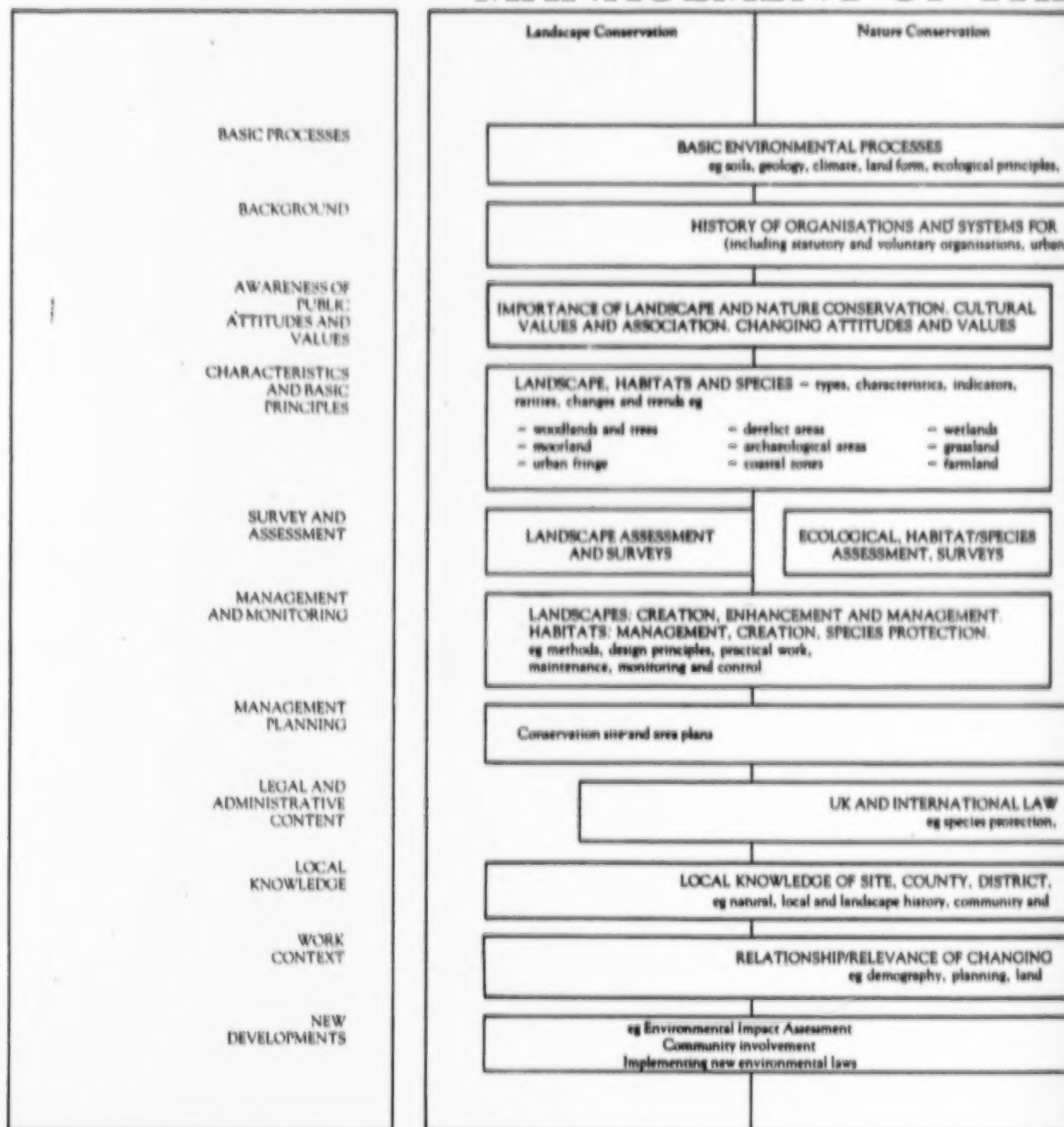
CHAIRMAN	Prof. Allan Patmore	- Department of Geography, University of Hull
MEMBERS	Steven Ankers	- Unit Director Greater Manchester Countryside Unit Association of Metropolitan Authorities
	<i>Representing:</i> Nick Atkinson	- Deputy National Park Officer Dartmoor National Park Association of National Park Officers
	<i>Representing:</i> Colin Beard	- National Training Manager British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
	<i>Representing:</i> Colin Bonsey	- Recreation Officer Hampshire County Council Independent Member
	Jo Burgon	- Adviser Coast and Countryside The National Trust
	<i>Representing:</i> Peter Cradock	- HM Inspector (Education) Her Majesty's Inspectorate
	<i>Representing:</i> Tim Greenwood	- Deputy County Planning Officer Hampshire County Council Association of County Councils
	<i>Representing:</i> Sharon Gunn	- External Training Co-ordinator Nature Conservancy Council
	<i>Representing:</i> Allan Lewis	- Principal Planning Officer Ceredigion District Council Association of District Councils
	<i>Representing:</i> Philip Lowe	- Lecturer Countryside Planning University College London Independent Representative
	Brian McLaughlin	- Head of Land Use National Farmers Union Independent Representative
	Rosie Simpson	- Countryside Staff Training Officer Countryside Commission
	<i>Representing:</i> Geoff Wolstencroft	- Executive Director Kerrier Groundwork Trust Association of Countryside Rangers
	<i>Representing:</i> Katharine Hope	- Countryside Commission
SECRETARY		

9 LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Paragraph	Figure	Title
2.18	1	Growth in membership of voluntary conservation and countryside recreation organisations
2.23	2	Selection of countryside staff job vacancies
2.23	3	Range of countryside staff posts within Peak District National Park
3.33	4	Examples of training provided by employers
4.5	5	Job description for heritage coast project officer showing organisational, interpersonal, practical and technical skills.
4.9	6	Key skills and core knowledge
4.14	7	Extract from BTCV short course programme
5.1	8	The three-way partnership
5.4	9	The training cycle
5.5	10	Developing a training strategy – The example of the Greater Manchester Countryside Unit
5.9	11	Consultancy assessment of FWAG officers' training needs
5.11	12	Code of good training practice for employers and managers
5.13	13	Code of good training practice for staff and volunteers
5.14	14	Code of good training practice for training providers
5.23	15	Proposed structure of countryside staff training forum
6.3	16	Professional institutes of relevance to countryside staff
6.15	17	CPD and the Royal Town Planning Institute
6.19	18	Examples of countryside staff associations and societies
6.20	19	Developing a training programme. A case study of the Association of National Park and Countryside Voluntary Wardens

Paragraph	Figure	Title
7.2	20	The many facets of training
7.5	21	The skills required of a trainer of countryside staff
7.9	22	The skills needed by the occasional trainer
7.14	23	Managers' involvement in training
7.16	24	Example of a short course for training administrators
7.18	25	A checklist for assessing training providers
8.5	26	Changing skill requirements for staff at different grades
8.7	27	Developing units of the framework
8.8	28	Examples of competences and performance criteria
9.3	29	Sources of funding for countryside staff training
APPENDIX 2.		
2.1	30	Full-time qualifications in subjects related to countryside management
2.9	31	Training for national park staff
2.14	32	Part-time qualifications in subjects related to countryside management
2.20	33	Part-time diploma in Countryside Management
2.22	34	Manchester Polytechnic part-time Post-graduate Diploma in Countryside Management
2.23	35	Countryside Commission criteria for selection of sponsored national courses

MANAGEMENT OF THE



RESOURCE

Other Land Uses

pressure, human population and land use, pollution, dynamic change

LAND USE, CONSERVATION AND COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION
(rural and rural locations, and the planning system)

ATTITUDES OF OTHER LAND
USERS AND OF PUBLIC TO LAND
USES

LAND USE TYPES AND TRENDS
eg
- forestry - waste disposal
- agriculture - minerals
- water - energy
- recreation - building
- industry

LAND USE ASSESSMENT, SURVEY

INTRODUCTION TO
MANAGEMENT
OTHER LAND USES

MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR MULTI-PURPOSE LAND USE
eg land use plans, countryside strategies, forestry strategies, recreation strategies

RELATING LAND USES, CONSERVATION,
planning, public safety, pollution

REGION OR NATIONAL LEVEL (as appropriate)
individual contacts, sensitivities, local groups and organisations

INTERNATIONAL/NATIONAL/LOCAL POLICIES AND TRENDS
use rules, market needs and demands, law, technology

Agricultural and Forestry Policy
Changes, Urban Forestry
Working in a European context

MANAGEMENT FOR PEOPLE

Countryside Recreation and Access
Resource management Management for people

IMPORTANCE OF COUNTRYSIDE FOR
RECREATION AND ACCESS

COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION AND ACCESS
- activities, users, non-users, trends
- active informal recreation, (eg walking, cycling, riding)
- passive enjoyment, (eg picnicking, sight-seeing)
- use of facilities (country parks, interpretation)
- characteristics of users and non-users

RECREATION RESOURCE
SURVEYS

VISITOR/NON
USER SURVEYS

SITE/AREA
MANAGEMENT FOR
PROMOTION OF PUBLIC
ENJOYMENT

VISITOR MANAGEMENT
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Communication

COMMUNICATION
PRINCIPLES

IMAGE AND
CORPORATE STYLE

PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS
AND STANDARDS

RANGE OF METHODS (visual, audio, verbal etc)
- telephone use
- public speaking
- report writing and presentation
- listening
- negotiation/bargaining
- graphics
- leaflet/report production
- using the media
- organising, participating and
chairing meetings
- guided walks
- working with special groups
- training and instruction
(* in common with management
communication skills)

Interpretive Plans, Publicity
and information campaigns

Copyright, Radio operation
Public performances

Media contacts

New techniques

MANAGEMENT OF THE SYSTEM

Environmental Organisations and Business Management

REASONS/NEED FOR GOOD ORGANISATION

ENVIRONMENTAL AND BUSINESS ETHICS

SYSTEMS AND ORGANISATION IN THE PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND
VOLUNTARY SECTOR
- organisation (planning, control, direction, evaluation)
- basic economics
- financial management
- fund raising and grants
- marketing
- stock control
- office procedures
- basic office management
- contract briefing and management
- record keeping

Business/corporate plans and strategies

Business Tax Law

Sources of local services
Working contacts with land organisations

Changing organisational objectives and systems

Environment as a business

Managerial Skills

MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES
FOR SELF AND OTHERS

PEOPLE AS A MANAGEMENT
RESOURCE

STAFF EXPECTATIONS AND
MOTIVATION

SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE
MANAGEMENT OF SELF AND
STAFF
- communication skills
- time management
- work planning and organisation
- supervision
- staff management
- staff recruitment
- team management
- employee system
- personal development
- training assessment and
development
- personal/staff appraisal
- working with volunteers, trainees
etc
(* see communication skills methods)

Work programmes

Employment Law, Health and Safety
Equal Opportunities

Appraisal systems
Competitive
tendering
Developing
training strategies
New technology